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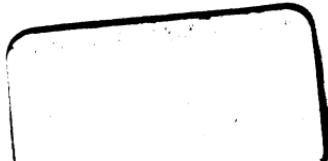
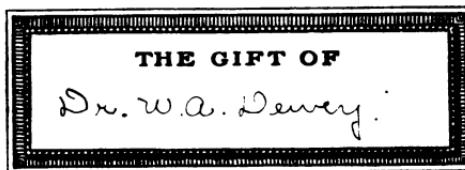
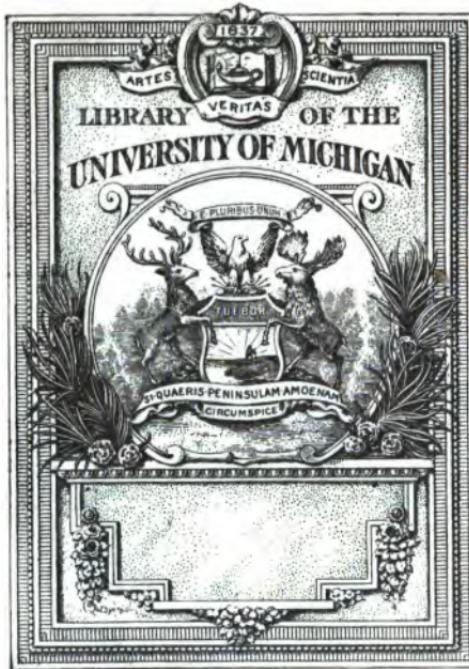
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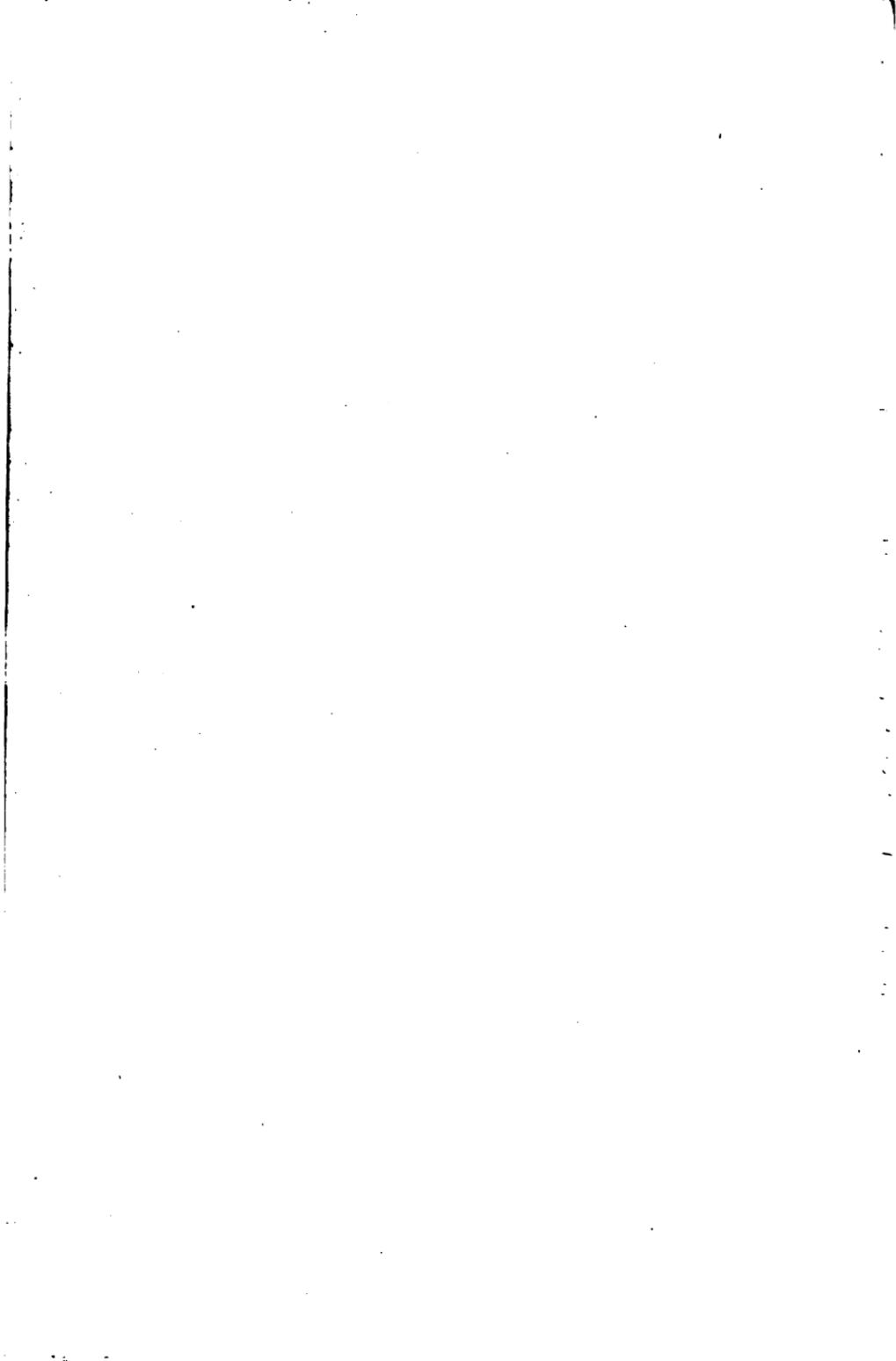
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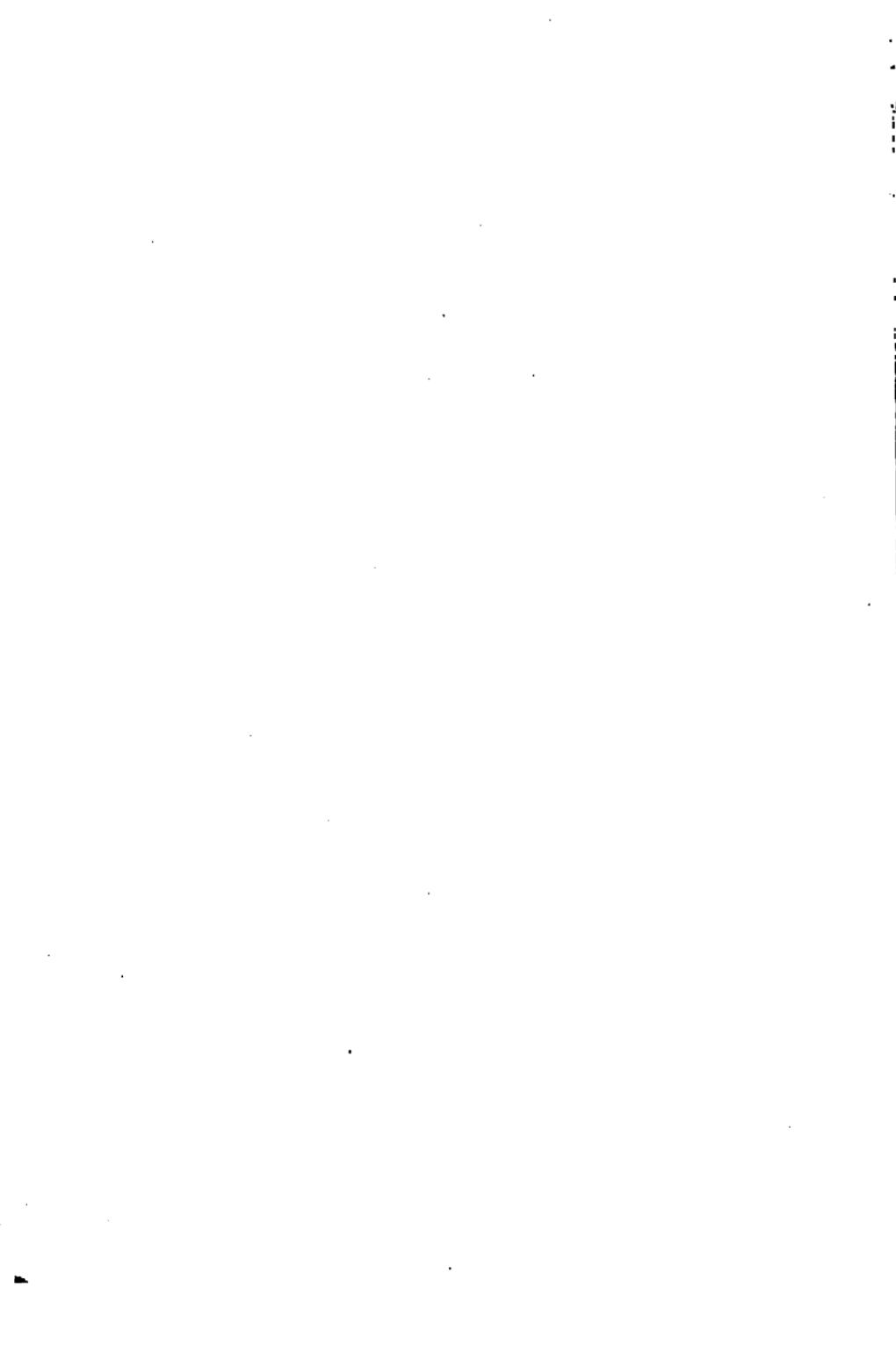


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THE
OCEANIDES



THE OCEANIDES

POEMS &
TRANSLATIONS
BY
PERCY W. SHEDD

*“Recuerde la alma dormida,
Avive el seso y despierte,
Contemplando
Cómo se passa la vida,
Cómo se viene la muerte
Tan callando.” —MANRIQUE.*



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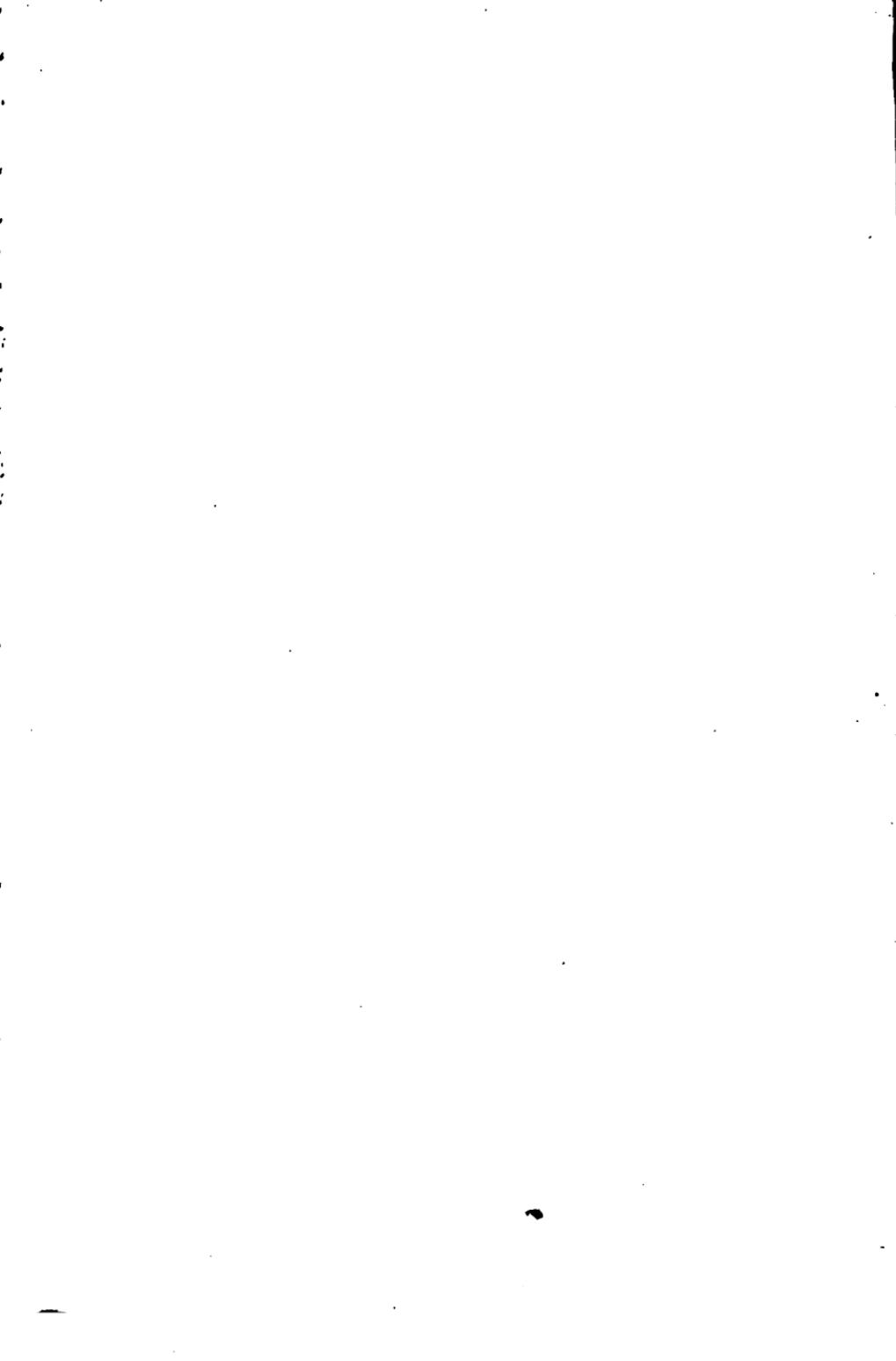
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TO
M Y W I F E

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THE OCEANIDES

FROM depths of living waters we arise,
When thou dost call;
Up from the caverns of an ancient sea,
Bound in thy thrall;
We grasp our many-chording harps of nacré shell,
Lean on a heaving surge's rounded swell,
From brows sweep back the tendril-twining locks,
And sing:

Du Sterblicher, was machst Du hier?
Geh heim! zurück!
Fur Dich zu salzig ist das "Meerall" Bier,
Der Wallfischschnitt zu dick.
Wir alle sind zwei hundert tausend tausend
Jahre alt,
Du Neues noch . . .
Potz tausend! dort steht Neptun zornig brau-
send.
Ihr Schwestern, sinkt!
Erdbub', 's ist Schade doch.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

THE mighty hills arise, and on their peaks
The eastern glory falls;
The drowsy valley wakes, and to his flocks
The shepherd calls.

"The day is fair, and shall we climb above,
Or wander o'er the plain?
'Tis safe, 'tis calm below, and if we climb,
What shall we gain?"
An Ancient with his stave roamed through the dale;

To him the young men turned:

“Good father, is it best to climb, or no?”
His eye but burned.

“Good father, hast thou topped the mountain
crest?”

He answered, “Ay.”

“And shall we climb the height, or bide below?”
He said, “’Tis high;

And if ye bide below ye cannot fall;
Above, ye may.

Yet, if ye climb, ye then shall see and know
The day.

The path is rough, the striving long, and some
Have died.

Climb, if ye will: the choice is yours to climb
Or bide.

But, if ye will, climb now when life is new;
Wait not too long.

The mountain-climber must have heart and nerve,
And sinews strong.”

The young men parted: most turned to the plain
And strolled away.

A few girt round their loins, and sped in haste
The mountain way.

Long years have passed. The Stranger in the
vale

Turns round to cry,

“Good people, tell me who the old man there!
Why burned his eye?”

They answer, “Give him honor, Friend, for he
Hath been on high!”

MY LITTLE SISTERS ARE THE FLOWERS

MY little sisters are the flowers;
But not the rose,
That dame imperious,
That sayeth,
“To thy knees, O knave!
How dar’st thou gaze,
Where kings are bond and slave?
Thou upstart!”

My little sisters are the flowers;
But not the fair,
White-throated vestal,
Lilium,
That seems to wave
A wand of elfin witchment round about;
Too cold, too calm, and grave
For me.

My little sisters are the flowers;
But not the pinks
Parisian, nor that foreign folk,
The orchids . . . I know not their ways;
Nor scarlet tulips . . . surely they must rouge!
Nor pansies . . . for I’ll wed one of these days;
I have such thoughts.

My little sisters are the flowers,
That bend above me when I doze afield;
The clover-bloom, the dainty buttercup,
The day’s-eye, and the runaway wild-rose,
These know me.

And when I dream too long,
And wake to find the stars all lit above,
And dews fast-falling through a dusky air,
They bend down gently over whom they love,
With nodding, nodding, blinking little heads,
And tiny hands fast shut in silent prayer.

THE CHILD AND THE BIRD

The Mother:

Child, the little singing-bird doth sleep.

The Child:

But, mother, 'tis the morning,
And the sun is up.
Come, bird, awake and sing,
And say thou lov'st me.

The Mother:

Dear heart, the little singing-bird doth sleep,
And will not sing again,
For he is dead.

The Child:

Dead! dead?
Why, mother, the sun shines!
He hath but overslept . . .
He'll sing again, he'll wake, dear mother?

The Mother:

No more.

The Child:

No more.
But the sun shines, mother!

The sun shines . . . I see the shadow leaves
Dancing on the wall . . .
I hear the waters rippling
And laughing o'er the pebbles . . .
I hear the wild birds singing . . .

.
.
I want to see him, mother!

.
.
Yes, he sleeps, mother,
But he's not dead.
His soul . . . wee birds have souls, mother?
His soul has flown away.
You said souls never, never died, mother . . .
He's just gone on a way
To heaven, where birds and little children dwell.

The Mother:

Yes, babe.
Kiss him, and we'll take him back
To good old mother Earth,
Who giveth little bodies rest.
We'll plant a daisy flower
Where he shall be . . .
And thou shalt come
And sit sometimes,
And think what a dear little bird he was;
How he sang in dark and sunshine;
And how thou lov'dst him.

The Child:

Yes, mother, but . . .

VERONA

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

THE round, bright moon rolls through the
heavenly deep;
And sprites unseen, of hill and stream and air,
Are weaving in the shadowed stillness, rare
Fine nets of witchment round a world asleep.
The hoary-crested Alps toward heaven leap,
As though to clip the goddess Night they'd
dare;
Verona, lost in shadow, lieth there;
But souls entranced, Verona's memories keep.

And I have yearning? Here where golden rain
Of fruit and flower to elysian fields
Through jocund flying hours forever falls?

Ah, list thou! . . . echoing answer comes again
From waves whose song none other descant yields:
“There is no world without Verona walls.”

CRADLE SONG

IBSEN

NOW rise the roof and ceiling
To star-enjewelled dome;
Now flieth little Hakon,
On dream-wings forth to roam.

A ladder leads up steeply
From earth to paradise;
Now climbeth little Hakon,
With angels to the skies.

God's baby-angels hover
About all babes asleep;
God hold thee, little Hakon,
Thy mother watch shall keep!

LOST MUSIC

FROM THE GERMAN OF ROLLETT

DEEP in my heart there lingers
A music low and long;
And oft it strives, deep-hidden,
To burst forth into song.

But words to this heart music
Elude me in the gloom, . . .
Perchance 'twill echo dying,
Where darkeneth the tomb.

STORM-SWALLOWS

IBSEN

STORM-SWALLOWS brood where the hoar
waves vault;—
Was the story told by an ancient salt.

Their pinions flash where the foam-crests leap;
They flit, never sink, where the surges sweep.

They heed the tides as they rise and fall;
In calms are still; with the storm-winds call.

'Tis a life twixt sea-deep and arching sky;
As dreams twixt earth and paradise lie.

Too heavy for air; too light for the sea;—
O bird of the poets, thy fate this must be!

Ay, and what's worse;—the learned refrain,
“Such tales are the froth of a mariner's brain.”

THE POWER OF MEMORY

IBSEN

HAVE you heard how they who the wild beasts
train,
Teach bears what they never forget again?

In a brewer's kettle the bear is bound,
And a fire is built 'neath the kettle's round.

On his hurdy-gurdy the trainer plays,
“Oh, life let us cherish,” for bruin's praise.

For pain his bearship to think has no chance;
He cannot stand still, and therefore must dance.

Whenever he hears the well-known refrain,
A dancing mania besets him again.

Fast-bound in the kettle was once my lot;
And the music played, and the flame grew hot.

More than dermis was well-calcined;
The memory never escapes my mind.

Whenever the echoes again resound,
I feel myself tied in the kettle's round.

My nail-roots burn in the furnace heat, . . .
I must dance again on my rhythmic feet.

EXPECTATION

FROM THE FRENCH OF LOISEAU

MY heart hath joy in climes translucent, bright;
I love the warm embrace of July days,
Their sheaves of golden grain, their burning rays,
Their heavy perfumes are my soul's delight.
Why doth to-day my glance, sad as the night,
Find heaven's dome too fair, the flow'rs a maze
Of garish hues, the songs of woodland praise
Without a charm, the sheaves of beauty slight?

Oh, why do I desire the whirlwind's breath
To cast down at my feet the leaf whose death
It caused; to see November gloom the skies?

But yet, my heart, whence cometh thy surprise?
When on thy lips and eyes his kiss did burn,
With autumn days he promised to return.

CONSLIUM

LEARN simple pleasures and a wise content.
Strive to enrich the heart,
And not so much the purse;
For these are treasures
And encrystalled gems
Within the tortuous windings of the heart.
Their splendor
Hath no devil's gleam
To blast the soul
Of him that hath a soul.

WORSHIP

THE altars of God are the mountains,
His acolytes, sun, moon, and star;
His chrism, the wave of the fountains,
His font is the sea flung afar;
His cathedral, the dome of high heaven
Whose columns ethereal rise;
Its zenith the Pleiades seven,
Its crypt where immensity lies;
Its high-priest, the mind that aspiring
Hath riven its fetters in twain;
The spheres in antiphonal choiring
Recede, and the star-tapers wane.

DIZZY

SUM little kyds a-whirlin' in the street,
Like tops a-spinnin' round upon their feet.

They squawk with glee to see the world turn round,
An' tink themselves its centre, I'll be bound.

Majestic man, wot walks with so much pride,
Metinks that like the kyds you're dizzified.

BEREAVEMENT

FROM THE DANISH OF BÖDTCHER

WHAT here we love, to us is only lent
For time uncertain, Nature doth forewarn;
And wilt thou have with joy no sorrow blent,
Love not at all; hast then no heart-strings torn.

But sorrow is an angel's shadow-hand,
That purifies our love, and makes it worth
To dwell eternally in God's fair land,
And therefore thou must . . . love, here on the
earth.

AGNES

IBSEN

AGNES, my beautiful butterfly,
Thee will I sportively capture;
I'll weave me a net of meshes so fine,
My meshes of song shall enrapture.

“Am I a butterfly fine and small?
Ah, let me sip from the heather;
Lovest thou sport? Pursue, do not catch;
Thus shall we play together.”

Agnes, my beautiful butterfly,
Finished and fine is my weaving;
Bootless thy fluttering, glancing flight,
Soon caught in the mesh deceiving.

“Am I a butterfly young and fair,
Airy and fluttering minion?
If thou shouldst catch me in meshes fine,
Ah, touch not my delicate pinion!”

Nay, I will take thee soft, soft in my hand,
Imprison thee in my bosom;
There mayst thou wanton thy lifetime through
In joy of all joys most gladsome.

APRÈS

THE lilies of Persia bloom for me,
Its rivers are flecked with pearls;
The roses of Persia regally
Bend as I pass, and the lucent sea
With a moon-struck wave o'er
The white sand curls
In obeisance,
And stars shimmer tenderly . . .
For I'm dead . . . and at last I see!

THE WONDERFUL

GOETHE

LIKE sheering cliff whose mass far-falling,
Weighs down upon abysmal deeps;
Like brooks of many voices calling,
Ere o'er the brink the foam-flood leaps;
Like trees whose inborn force upstarting,
Seeks union with the stars above;
So is creative, all-imparting,
Conserving, guarding, sovereign Love.—
A wild and mystic din is sounding,
As though high cliff and forest shook.
And yet, with cadent, gentle bounding,
Straight to the chasm runs the brook,
The parchèd vales with dews redeeming;
The lightning's flame, that struck a path
Through airs with poison-vapors steaming,
A mission had, but not of wrath;
Love's heralds these, whose speech forever
Reveals most puissant energy.

ALBUM LEAF

IBSEN

“ **M**Y light o’ life ” was then thy name;
 “ My radiant star ” I called thee.
Thou wast, as God remains the same,
A light with darkness for a flame,
A falling star whose radiance came, . . .
And died away obscurely.

SPRING-TIME

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

THREE is a whisp’ring through the land,
 A murmur by the sad sea strand,
That he is come,—’tis true, love.
He stands within his palace there,
With glowing cheeks and shining hair,
Strong as when time was young, love.

His glance falls on the multitude,
His bow-string twangs, forth fly a brood
Of fire-tipped shafts unbroken.
The bride in widow’s weeds bedight,
Who with her maidens sat affright,
Smiles at the happy token.

Long time she wove in dread and gloom,
And rent and re-set to the loom
Her winding-sheet of whiteness;
But now she scarce may trust her eye,
Like lightning’s flash across the sky
Her gloom is turned to brightness.

The sorrows that oppressed her soul,
The fear, chagrin, the bitter dole,
That filled the land with sadness;
The woes that hung with vulture grasp
Upon her heart, their hold unclasp
And flee, as stung with madness.

The king of day in splendor drest,
Flings from his quiver east and west
His golden shafts of glory;
The bride in widow's weeds yclad,
The old earth ever young and glad,
Smiles,—'tis an ancient story.

SOLSTITIAL NIGHT

FROM THE GERMAN OF HERTZ

DEEP quiet, save the flames that leap
In rage athwart th' ethereal deep;
Now wav'ring, hid in swirling smoke,
Stir, flare, and gleam, and faintly choke.
The moon drifts earthward to the close;
And vale and hillock seek repose.

The rose, in dream-shot purple drest,
The lily, drowse against the west;
While dragon-flies entwining
Reel from the calyx shining;
And moon-struck beetles, am'rous lorn,
Fall, drops o' gold, from leaf to thorn.

The birds beneath their pinions
Are slumb'ring, dainty minions.
The glow-worm blows his candle out,
The wild beast roams no more about.

O' dreams is lost the faint alarm,
And love sleeps fast in love's round arm.
None wake save trembling stars that swoon
Almost, to clip the vestal moon.

FROM MY HOME LIFE

IBSEN

THE house was quiescent, the streets were dead;
I sat with the lamp well shaded.
Gloom and silence around were spread;
In came children with nodding head,
Where the wreaths of Havana faded.

They trooped, my fair, wingèd bairns, in line,
Youth and maidens wild, capricious;
Their cheeks as after a bath did shine,
They revelled in dances whimsic, fine,
Through regions of dream delicious.

But, just as the revel had reached its height,
In the glass I saw to my terror,
A guest in serious costume dight,*
With lead-gray eyes, and his coat drawn tight,
Wearing felt-shoes, or I'm in error.

Then fled the joy of my whimsic flock;
In his mouth one stuck his finger;
Another stood like a wooden block,
You know how children, when strangers knock,
Shy, spiritless, often linger.

* The poet's reflection in the mirror; the children are his thoughts and dreams.

BEAUTY

NOT things of beauty
 Pray I the great gods to give;
Not gems of crystallised fire,
Nor royal silken woof,
Nor great estate;
Not pencilled wonders,
Nor harp nor seraph voice;
Not these pray I;
But for the sense of beauty;
Which got, shall not be lost nor dulled.
This mine, the whole wide world is mine,
Though never mine.
The flash of sun on wave and gossamer,
The thrill of bird-song, flowers, grasses, trees;
The risings of the sun and surging tides,
And their downgoings;
The radiant ebon of the night,
The sound of friendly voices,
Or the sound of none.
Ye gods,
Vouchsafe the sense of beauty,
And my soul shall live!

DAWN

A CHILD crept through the tent's half-folded
 door,
And watched the lips of Dawn blow out the stars;
Upon the desert's gray and waveless shore
There for a time lay silence,
Hoar with eternity.

Then in the east faint gleams
Of crimson shook like fingers of a hand,
And Day and Allah looked upon the land.

THE SINGING BIRD

A LITTLE bird in my room doth dwell,
It hath a flute in its throat.

And it often sings,
With quivering wings,
Full many a merry note.

But sometimes it sits for hours all mute,
And never a note it sings.
And the twilight falls,
And the night-watch calls,
While fays dance in grass-grown rings.

Then an old guitar I musing take,
To the songster's cage I go;
And I play the tune
Of a wild strange rune,
Fair, softly, and gently slow.

With the first faint chord he lifts his head;
He lists to the music low;
'Tis ended: in song
Then the flute-notes throng,—
None sweeter the angels know.

Sometimes I sit as the bird held caged;
The sound of a harp is heard;
It wanes: and I try
In vain to reply
With song. . . . O thou happy bird!

LOST ATLANTIS
FROM THE DANISH OF HÖEDT

WHERE blue seas murmur
In sunbeam glows,
In days so olden
A city rose;
But earth oped widely
Its dragon throat . . .
The city slumbers
Where sea-forms float.

Where erst was beauty,
Life, joy's light tread,
Is spun in darkness
The seaweed's thread;
And none there listen,
None see the shore;
The legend whispers,
Ah, nevermore!

But go thou softly
When night-birds call,
And list thou unto
The surges' fall;
Thou'l hear a music
Like doom-fraught knells,
The far-off moaning
Of coastwise bells.

It is the ancient,
The sea-drowned town;
Its death-song quavers
The long years down;

Like winds a-sighing
O'er sea-waves high,
The tones come moaning
A-drift . . . and die.

Where now sea-heather
Grows rank and torn,
Where gray mists waver
Ice-cold and lorn;
There bloomed in ages
Long gone, far sped
A world of beauty,
A world long dead.

Phantasmal, golden,
Far-vistaed gleams;
With sunlit heaven
Whose clouds were dreams;
With red, red roses,
With choiring birds,
With nights star-lanterned,
And love's low words.

Each gift celestial
Thence earthward sent;
Each flow'r, all music,
Alas, death-blent!
Here rose in beauty,
With magic art;
A world enchanted,
A thought its heart.

But now sea-heather
Grows rank and torn;

The gray mists waver
So cold and lorn;
None ever listen,
None see or know;
None catch the glory
Of long ago.

Yet, hast thou careworn
With life's dull fears,
Held in remembrance
Thy childhood years;
Hath yet thy striving
To hoard red gold
Not banished dreams of
The days of old.

Bide thou at even,
Where wild birds fly,
And list, ah stilly,
To winds that sigh;
Thou'l hear a music
Like doom-fraught knells,
Like far-heard moaning
Of coastwise bells.

There lies the city
That once arose,
Itself lamenting
Its heart-deep woes;
Like winds a-sighing,
Like moon-beams' flight,
The tones come moaning
Athwart the night.

THE ADAMANTINE GATES

UNTO the palace gates there came a Soul,
Unto the ever-during gates of adamant,
And prayed to enter.
Then to him spake the Watcher very old:
Hast thou the thrice-notched key to roll the triple
wards,
So mayst thou enter.
Straightway the Soul replied: I have a key,
Which, when I got, was straight in line and all
uncut;
Here mayst thou see it.
And from his bosom drew he forth a key
Thrice deeply cut. The Watcher took, and read
thereon
The word, "Great Striving."
He looked and read again; his eye grew dim,
For "Sacrifice" he traced in jagged lines of flame
That whitely burned there;
And came unto the last deep-carven word
Upon the key, and deepest graved, the one word,
"Love."
And he spake, saying:
Roll back, ye gates, ye adamantine doors!
And blow, ye silver-throated trumpets, Victory!
Soul, thou mayst enter.
The gates rolled back, and rolled again. And he,
The ancient Watcher, sat down by the glorious
gates,
Murmuring, "Victory!"

TE DEUM

FROM THE RUSSIAN OF BOLOTEV

TO Thee, to Thee again I call,
Again my spirit soars above;
Again my heart and soul, with love
O'erflowing, in Thy presence fall.

O Mighty One, omnipotent
And sempiternal Lord of Hosts;
Creator, whom each creature boasts
Life's source and glory heaven-sent!

For all the grace Thou dost impart,
My heart I yield in sacrifice;
And for the hidden mercies rise
The pæans of a thankful heart.

Each day life's blessings Thou dost give,
Each day Thy bounty is renewed;
My heart is filled with gratitude,
That Thou dost let Thy creature live.

Ah! am I worthy e'en of one
Of all the mercies that like rain
Descend, or worthy Thou shouldst deign
To guard and keep till day is done?

I, but a worm, a thing of death;
Dust, ashes, naught before Thy throne!
Deserving not Thy mercy shown,
Fit only for Thy whirlwind's breath.

TE DEUM

THOU great god Pan!
Whose spirit throne
Is crypt in sea-caves dim and lone;
Up-rounded with a human moan,
Full-wreathed with cliff and protozoon,
Whereover swirl-mist gray is blown
To hide thy face.

Thou great god Pan!
Whose life is law;
Whose ways unknown are without flaw;
Who dwellest in a dragon's maw;
Whose arm hurls forth the lightning's awe;
Whose poisons deep their entrails gnaw,
That disobey.

Thou great god Pan!
To whom we pray
By doing, nor with mouthing say:
Thou fire by night, thou cloud by day!
But simply, calmly tread the way,
Though thunders crash or flow'rets sway,
Each knows is right.

Thou great god Pan!
Who from the slime
Of ancient myth-enshrouded time
Hath, notwithstanding monk and mime,
Or Boodhic drowse or Christless crime,
Wrought out, as poets weave a rime,
Thy purposed deeds.

Thou great god Pan!
Thou Consecrate,
Thou one Immediate and Great!
Who hath no priest to guard thy gate;
Who setteth seal upon the fate
Of pure in heart or reprobate,
Thou Truthful One!

Thou great god Pan!
Help that we see
In all that is, hath been, shall be,
A purpose grave with unity,
Whose import is: The slave make free.
Thou god to whom we bend the knee,
Thou great god Pan!

LEBENSDINGE

WER einmal liebt
Wird wohl betrübt;
Wer hasst ist nur ein Thor.
Wem weder liebt
Noch hasst, gewiss
Steht vieles Neu bevor.

Doch, weder Lieb
Mit ihrer Trüb',
Noch Hass mit seinem Feuer, . . .
Nur einem Herz
Aus Stein gemacht
Wird solches Leben teuer.

THE BLIND HARPIST

NIIGHT rolled before him wide the gates of dreams.

Sightless, he saw the far auroral fire,
The twining stars, the moonlit mountain spire;
His harp was broken, but the sound of streams
That fell from lofty cliffs in mists and gleams
He heard; and voiceless, joined the chanting choir
Antiphonal; the flow'rs, faint with desire,
Bent o'er him, dying in the gates of dreams.
Night waved her dusky plumes: far in the east
A solitary star its vigil kept.
Nocturnal rev'lers coming from the feast,
Saw mid the honey-laden blooms the least
Of all His children. Peacefully he slept.
The gates were shut forever. Dreams had ceased.

TERJE VIGEN

IBSEN

ON the farthest naked isle of the sea
Dwelt a graybeard strange and old;
No soul affrayed from his face would flee,
On land or the sea-deeps cold.
Yet anon his eye flashed fiercely red
When the winds and the waves rose high;
And then, . . . he is mad, the people said,
And then there were few that without a dread,
Passed Terje Vigen by.

Since then I have seen him but once, . . . his boat,
With fish, lay moored to the shore;

White-haired, but forth from his aged throat
Youth's merriment bubbled o'er.
A jest for the maidens jocund leapt,
He laughed with the babes and played;
Then he swung his cap, and the great sail crept
To the top, and home in the sun he swept,
Like the eagle's his course he laid.

And now will I tell you the simple tale
Of Terje and all that's past;
And should with the story your interest fail,
Still 'tis true from first to last.
He told it not himself to me,
I heard it from them that stood
Anear, when he sailed to the Unknown Sea,
Who closed his eyes when his soul broke free,
The soul of the Ancient good.

He was in his youth a royst'ring blade,
Left soon the old folk at home;
In many a riotous scene he played
His part where the deep keels roam.
He wandered the ocean to Amsterdam,
There a vision of home he had;
And sailed on the Union with Captain Bram,
But when in the haven the good ship swam,
None knew him that sailed a lad.

For now he was grown, grown strong and brave;
A well-kept, comely man;
The old folk slept in a peaceful grave,
And dead was the ancient clan.

He mourned for a day, it may be for twain,
Then cast his sorrow away;
With land 'neath his feet found no rest again,
'Twas better to dwell on the heaving main;
To build where the surges sway.

In a year and a day was Terje wed, . . .
'Twas hastily done in sooth;
He'll repent, and at leisure, the gossips said,
Of a deed that will bind his youth.
In a home all his own he dreamt away
A winter in love's carouse;
The windows shone as a sun-lit day,
Behind them were curtains and blossoms gay
In the tiny red-roofed house.

When the ice broke up with the spring-time gales,
On the sea-surge Terje tossed;
When the wild geese flew to far southern vales
In the autumn, their courses crossed.
Then a weight rolled down on the sailor's breast,
He felt himself young and strong;
He returned from lands where the sunbeams
rest, . . .
Behind him the world with its life and zest,
Before him the winter long.

They anchored, and shipmates with shore leave
went
To revel as sailors will;
Upon them his longing glance was bent,
As he stood by the cottage still.

He peered in behind the curtains white,
And twain he saw in the room;
His wife set flax for the loom aright,
But there in the cradle, fair, sweet and bright,
A little lass smiled in the gloom.

And the gossips say Terje's heart then knew
A change like the lightning's gleam;
He toiled and slaved, nor e'er weary grew
Of rocking the babe a-dream.

On Sunday eve when the dance waxed wild
Where the neighbors mad revel made,
At home he stayed, and the hours beguiled
With his gladdest songs, and the baby child,
Arm-bound, with his brown locks played.

Thus sped the years till the war came gaunt,
In eighteen hundred and nine;
E'en yet its horrors of woe and want
Are told over line for line.

The cruisers of England each harbor barred,
O'er the land swept the famine's breath;
The rich had need and the poor died hard,
Strong arms were proved but a flimsy guard;
At the door stood the pest and death.

And Terje pondered a day or twain,
Then he cast his sorrow afar;
He thought of a friend, old and true, again,
The sea-surge against the bar.
On the westward shore still the people tell
Of his deed, as the bravest, brave;

When the force of the frothy storm-wind fell,
In an open boat o'er the heaving swell
He rowed, his beloved to save.

In the tiniest skiff there was to find,
He sped for the Skagerack;
The mast and sail he had left behind,
More chance then of coming back.
He thought, did Terje, the boat will hold
Through the thwarting seas to steer;
Though the coast of Jutland was hard to clear,
Yet worse were the English warships near,
With eyes like sea-eagles bold.

So to chance and the gods his life he gave,
And sturdily bent to the oar;
To Fladstrand he came on a foamy wave,
And his treasure fetched from the shore.
God knows the lading was none too great,
Three barley casks, that was all;
But at home gray famine stood at the gate,
With the food on board he would change the fate
Of his wife and the baby small.

Three days, three nights to the thwart bound fast,
The strong man fought the sea;
On the dawn of the fourth, the sun at last
Rose over a mist-strown lee.
Not shadows were they he saw arise,
But pinnacled heights of snow;
And high over peak and cliff his eyes
Saw Imenaes towering, pierce the skies,
And he knew where his course should go.

Almost home, almost home; but a little space
To endure, and he shall be there;
With trust and hope he upturned his face,
And had almost breathed a prayer . . .
When it seemed that the word froze on his lip,
He stared, with a half-pent wail;
He saw where the mists in the breezes slip,
In the Imenaes sound a corvette ship
Pitch with the rising sail.

The skiff was seen, . . . and a signal boomed;
No longer the course lay free.
Not yet, however, was Terje doomed,
He turned to the western sea.
He saw the yawl through the davits slide;
The shouts of the sailors rang;
He braced his feet 'gainst the boat's thin side,
He rowed till the sea 'neath its foam did hide,
And the blood from his fingers sprang.

By Gaesling where reefs well-hidden sleep,
Just eastward of Homborg sound,
In writhings convulsive the surges sweep
To the strand o'er a shallow ground;
There whitened they leap and golden they gleam,
On the stillest sea-calm day;
Though the billows lofty as mountains seem, . . .
Past the reef, they flow like a placid stream,
Softly hither and yon they stray.

Terje's skiff flew thither o'er seething wave
Like an arrow shot to shore;

And after, the English long-boat drove,
With fifteen men at the oar.

Then it was that Terje his voice in prayer
Raised to God in his time of need, . . .

“On yonder strand, in the poor hut there,
My wife is waiting in dull despair;
With my child she waits for bread!”

But louder the fifteen shrieked than he,
As at Lyngor so fared it here;
With England dame Fortune hath deigned to be,
When she strikes at the Norseland drear.
As Terje ran 'gainst the shark-toothed reef,
The long-boat began to reel, . . .
Halt! thundered the voice of the English chief,
Terje raised his oar . . . to the order deaf . . .
And dashed out his boat's frail keel.

Thwart and keelson brake 'neath the stroke be-
stowed,
The sea swept a-through the flank;
Down two feet deep sank the precious load,
Terje's courage never sank.
He fought his way through the armèd men,
Sprang where the white seas fall;
He dove and swam and went down again,
But the yawl drew free, his pursuers then
Gave him sabre and rifle-ball.

They dragged him up to the ship's grim side,
The smoke of salute was seen;
By the stern there stood in triumphant pride
The chieftain, a lad eighteen.

He had played a jousting with Terje's boat,
Had won with his long-boat fleet;
And Terje's spirit the mischance smote,
With sob and pray'r welling in his throat,
He knelt at the chieftain's feet.

He bought with tears, and they sold him smiles;
They mocked at his prayer when done;
It blew from the east, and to sea for miles
Sailed England's triumphant son.
Terje silent grew, for all hope was past;
Deep his grief sank in his breast;
But they, his captors, thought strange how fast
His visage cleared that had been o'ercast,
As the clouds fade in the west.

Imprisoned he sat for an age and a day,
Full five as the long years roam;
Till his head was bowed, and his locks grown gray
With dreams of the far-off home.
In his heart he hid and in secret kept,
The thoughts trembling on his lip;
Till the year came round when war's demons slept,
And the Norsemen with Terje from England swept
Toward home on a Swedish ship.

Down the side he went and came to the shore,
With a royal commission in hand
As pilot, but few knew the old man hoar,
That sailed young and lusty from land;
A stranger's his home; those he went to save,
Were dead . . . and the Ancient reeled!

When the man sailed forth, no one succor gave,
And soon they went to a common grave,
And were buried in paupers' field.

The years dragged on, and his pilot trade
He plied where the surges rolled;
He wrought no woe unto man or maid,
On land or the sea-deeps cold.
Yet anon his eye flashed fiercely red
When the winds and the waves rose high;
And then, . . . he is mad, the people said,
And then there were few that without a dread
Passed Terje Vigen by.

On a moonlit night with a landward breeze,
The pilots were roused to life;
An English yacht drove through storming seas,
Sail-rent by the wind's keen knife.
As the cry of a wordless need, behold!
To masthead the red flag soared;
And laveering out went a pilot bold,
He tacked where the spumy surges rolled,
Till undaunted he stood on board.

So fearless he seemed, the white-haired man,
As he whirled the helm around;
The yacht obeyed, and escaped the ban
Of the sea and the sheering ground.
Milord and his lady, with child clasped sure,
Came aft, . . . with salute he stopped;
“I will make thee rich as thou now art poor,
If thou bear'st us safe from the billow's lure . . .”
Rope and helm the pilot dropped.

His cheek turned pale, to his lips there crept
A smile that at last grew plain;
And round went the helm, toward the reef he
swept,

They crashed in the seething main.
“She heeds not the helm! To the pilot boat,
Milord and lady, with me!
The yacht is lost, but we yet may float;
Of a channel near I have taken note,
And within is a tranquil sea.”

Through phosphorent waves the frail craft flew
Toward land with its precious load;
And aft stood the pilot so strong and true,
His eye with a strange fire glowed;
He looked a-lee to the Gaesling's top,
To windward at Hesnaes sound;
Then the helm let go with the mainsail stop,
And he swung an oar and he let it drop
With a crash through the boat's thin round.

The seas swept in with a livid foam,
They gnashed at the wreck low-laid;
The mother her child toward dim heaven's dome
Upraised, and in terror prayed;
“Anna, my baby!” she screamed in woe, . . .
Then shuddered the pilot gray;
And he grasped the ropes, and the rudder turned,
And quick as a bird that the ground hath spurned,
They drove through the seething spray.

They whirled and they sank, but a tranquil sea
Lay there past the breakers dread;

And a shoal arose where they safe might be,
Knee-deep in the waves that sped.
But milord cried, " Halt! No reef is this;
"Tis the keel of a sunken boat!"
But the pilot smiled, " Take it not amiss;
"Tis a boat with three kegs of grain, I wis,
That keepeth us now afloat."

Then the thought of a deed half-forgotten, lit
Like lightning the lord's pale face;
And he knew the man from whose wan lips slipt
A prayer for his lordship's grace.
Then Terje thundered, " Once with thy hand,
For a fame thou didst work me woe;
A moment more, and we equal stand . . ."
Then the lord from the haughty English land,
'Fore the Norseman bent him low.

But Terje stood . . . in his grasp the oar . . .
As straight as in days long by;
And his eyes with fury but flamed the more,
And the winds made his thin locks fly;
" Thou didst sail as a king in thy mighty ship,
My skiff so mean I rowed;
I slaved for mine own till the finger-tip
Oozed blood; their bread thou didst steal; thy lip
Its scorn on my grief bestowed.

" Thy dame is fair as a spring-time morn,
Like silk is her hand so fine;
My wife's poor hand was but hard and worn,
But nathless she once was mine.

Thy child hath hair like the fine-spun gold,
Blue eyes like the sun-lit sea;
My daughter was naught that one might behold,
She was, God's pity, thin, wan, and old,
Ay, a poor man's child was she!

"Of such were the riches my heart possessed,
My kingdom, my wealth, my all;
And for me 'twas the dearest, the fairest, best;
But to thee it seemed very small.
The hour of my vengeance now is near;
The depths of a woe thou'l know,
That shall balance the weight of a five-fold year
That bent my head, set the white locks here,
And brought all my fortune low."

Then the child he drew with his right arm free;
With the left dragged milady nigh, . . .
"Stand back, milord, for a step toward me,
And thy wife and thy child shall die!"
Then the Briton crouched for the fight in him,
But his arms were weak and worn;
His pulses throbbed, and his eyes grew dim, . . .
And white locks swept o'er his temple's rim
When the sun arose at morn.

But the pilot's brow became tranquil, clear;
His breast heaved slowly, calm;
With rev'rence he held the sweet babe near
And kissed its dainty palm.
Then he sighed as if loosed from a prison cell,
And he spake in an even tone,

“ With Terje Vigen again 'tis well;
Hitherto but ice in my veins did swell, . . .
This vengeance I must have known.

“ The long, long years in the dungeon keep
Made the leaf of my heart grow sear;
I lay as the stubble on mountain steep,
And gazed down a chasm sheer.
But now 'tis past; . . . I the debt recall,
Whether fairly thou well dost know;
I give again; thou didst take my all;
Dost thou think I have done thee a wrong, then call
To our Lord who hath made me so.”

When the sun rose up, to the land they came;
In the haven the yacht swung light;
Far and wide went the sound of the pilot's name,
Though they spake not of the night.
The sullen clouds of a horrid dream
The storm-burst had swept away;
And Terje lifted, with pride I deem,
The head he had bowed to the corvette's beam
On that fateful, hopeless day.

His lordship came, and milady too;
Ay, many did thither roam;
In parting they wrung Terje's hand so true,
As they stood in his humble home.
They thanked him for rescue from storm and stress,
For rescue from death's despair;
But Terje stroked gently the fair babe's dress, . . .
“ Nay, that which saved when the worst did press,
Was the babykin lying there.”

As the yacht laveered into Hesnaes sound,
Terje saw the Norse flag wave;
Yet more to the west by a foam-fleckt ground,
A parting salute they gave.
And in Terje's eyes glitt'ring tears were seen,
As he stood on the cliff's dry sod;
"Much I lost, but ah! much have gained, I ween;
'Tis best as it is, and my soul is clean,
For which take Thou thanks, O God!"

Since then I have seen him but once, . . . his boat
With fish lay moored to the shore;
White-haired, but forth from his aged throat
Youth's merriment bubbled o'er.
A jest for the maidens jocund leapt;
He laughed with the babes and played;
Then he swung his cap, and the great sail crept
To the top, and home in the sun he swept,
Like the eagle's his course was laid.

In Fjaere churchyard a grave now lies
In a spot where the storm-wind sweeps;
Uncared for, mould'ring before my eyes, . . .
But a grave-board remembrance keeps;
"Thaerie Wiighen" in white-lined script I read,
With the year when his soul went forth . . .
He lies where the sun and the tempest tread,
The grass is parched and a long time dead, . . .
But wild flowers bloom in the North.

TO IBSEN

THE trickster said,
Let old things be.

The poet said,
From old things flee.

The trickster said,
Of stink-pots 'ware!

The poet said,
Why are they there?

The trickster said,
Haste, gain thee pelf.

The poet said,
Gain thou thyself.

The trickster said,
Nay, that is wrong!

The poet said,
Why is it wrong?

The trickster said,
Believe, or die!

The poet said,
Friend, tell me why.

The trickster said,
Thou spoil'st my trade.

The poet said,
'Tis not gainsayed.

The trickster said,
Why art thou here?

The poet said,
To live, not fear.

THE WEDDING RING

FROM THE DUTCH (1637) OF CATS

ALL that on the earth is found,
All that soars through heaven's round,
All that in the sea-deeps cold,
Wrought divinely, lives of old,
All, down to the naked worm,
All, to the minutest germ,
All, and e'en the fish that swim
'Neath the waters' curling brim;
All the herbs bent by the breeze,
All the gnarly forest trees,
E'en the stone's hard crystal heart
In this wonder hath a part, . . .
That within, a fire doth play;
That all love, each in his way,
That each seeks its mate to find,
Seeks a fellow of its kind;
That it woos, and amorous plays,
Off'rings at Love's altar lays.
Thus, e'en when the earth was young,
Was the world's way, chaos-sprung;
And shall steadfast be and sure
And through æons long endure,
Till, when earth shall pass away,
Love eternal shall have sway.

THE POPPY FLOWER

FROM THE GERMAN OF STURM

GREETING, scarlet poppy bloom!

On my path thou glowest;
Like a fire flame through the gloom
Thou resplendent blowest.

Sunward turns thy face so fair,
By the highway gleaming;
In thine heart lies magic rare,
Stuff for gentle dreaming.

THE CHURCH

IBSEN

THE monarch bended
Till twilight fell;
When night descended
Came trolls and ended
His work full well.

Toward heaven uncoiling,
The towers start;
But royal toiling
And trollish moiling
Gave blended art.

The people wondered,
With faith they glow;
Day's labor blundered
With night's work conjured; . . .
'Twas ever so!

WEAVING

AH, youth is a loose-spun web,
For the weaver's a careless wight,
The weaver's a wight with a heart distract,
With a pattern vague . . . through the meshes
bright

He would glimpse the sun and the dusk starlight,
And the gleam o' wave in the moonbeam play,
And the glance o' eyes that will love alway . . .
Ay, the threads fly wild through the hastening day,
And the wide dim night.

But age is a web close-drawn,
And the weaver most prudent, he;
He croucheth over the dusky loom,
He wond'reth what shall the pattern be,
Yet hardly the sluggish threads may see
For the twilight o' the room,
For the quav'ring shadow-gloom . . .
Till the lilies of Paradise bloom,
And the weaver turns to see.

"SO MUCH TO DO . . ."

SO much to do, so little done:
The old myopic rune doth run;
As though the stars, the sea, the sun,
Were much concerned at what was done.

Life's day is brief, and Art is long:
Another slumber-banning song; . . .
But Nature smiles, and builds a flow'r,
Whose life is one long sentient hour,

Whose root winds through the hollow eyes
Of some brave mortal past surprise;
And yet the flow'r is passing fair,
Though Art had no dominion there.

The gods are good! They drift the sand
Across the proud Assyrian land;
The gods are good! Their floods are sent,
And great Atlantis' head is bent;
The gods are good! Their ice-streams creep,
And where was life, is death and sleep.
Ye mighty gods, oh grow not pale
If some vain mortal groan and wail:
So much to do! So much to do!
The hour hath come! I'm not half through . . .
Oh wait, ye gods. . . .

Nay, let him mark the calm deep glance,
The sternly gentle countenance
That sayeth: Live thy little day,
A part for work, a part for play.
The cell hath birth, the cell doth live,
And then to death the cell I give;
Thereof new forms and strange I build,
The crystal rock with gold I gild,
The flow'r with honey have I filled,
Unto the glow-worm light I lend, . . .
I gave thee life that thou mightst wend
Thy little way; . . . be not afraid,
Of thee yet something shall be made.
But whether zoon or pearl or worm,
My great decree doth not confirm.

Thou nor thy work shall go to waste;
Naught in my realm is e'er displaced.
Be calm, and to thy life be true;
Thus only payest thou thy due.

THE WAVE

FROM THE SWEDISH OF NICANDER

MY life is a wave,
And a year and a day
Where winds loudly rave,
It swelling doth sway.

When calm is the sea,
And winds blow no more,
It sleeps dreamily
By ripple-kissed shore.

It slumbers and dreams
At rest in the deep;
'Tis vanished, meseems,
Yet there doth it sleep.

A drop, frail and small,
In world-oceans wide;
Yet the sun over all,
It mirrors in pride.

THE SONG; THE FOOL; THE SAGE

The Fool:

Ah! never shall I weary of the sound
Of thy sweet song.
Its melodies
Float through the hidden windings of my soul
And subtly roll
Far down and into being's farthest goal.
O sing, O sing
While flow'r-bells in the sun-glow swing,
While moon and star their radiance fling;
While hours fade into days,
And days seek years, and years the ages,
Rolling in æons through eternal seas!

The Sage:

Nay, sing a little while,
And then be still;
And let me dream,
Adrift on Lethe's stream,
Forgetful e'en of thee and all thy song.
And when I wake,
Then let a thousand things
And all the tumult that a season brings,
Come in between,
Be felt and seen,
Ere thou shalt strike the harp's accorded strings
And utter song.
Then through the æons I shall never tire,
And my desire
Shall ever be insatiate of thy song.

MOSS-ROSE BUD

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

FAIR moss-rose bud, art wanton sweet, but
whether . . .
Not willingly I'd prophesy disaster . . .
Yet fain would hope thy bodice hold together!

ASHES

HAST e'er watched the flames in the chimney-
place

Go roaring aloft in tumultuous race?

They writhe and they dance, they flutter and
gleam;

They furnish the scenes for an artist's dream.

Wouldst deaden the fire till in ashes it lies,—
Cast ashes upon it, . . . it smothers and dies.

For fire that is young, old ashes are best
To purge it of life and bring it to rest.

To kill aspiration, let hearts long burnt out,
Encompass, surround it, and bind it about.

The dream and the song, the poet's refrain,
Will soon turn to ashes, nor flame forth again.

Wouldst live, and be young; die not early but late?
Keep ashes and burnt hearts away from the grate!

SPRING-TIME

FROM THE FRENCH OF D'ORLÉANS, 1425

TIME flingeth his old coat away,
 Of wind and of coldness and rain,
Putteth on his laced doublet again
 Of sunshine clear, smiling and gay.

No bird nor the beast that doth play,
But exults in its call or its strain;
Time flingeth his old coat away,
 Of wind and of coldness and rain.

Brooks, fountains, and rivers display
New vestments so pretty and vain,
Caught up with a silver-wrought chain;
Freshly clad each one greeteth the day.
Time flingeth his old coat away,
 Of wind and of coldness and rain.

THE ANT

THE ant climbed up the hill's steep side—and
 fell.
He laughed; then tried.

The ant climbed up the hill's steep side—and fell.
He rose; then tried.

The ant climbed up the hill's steep side—and fell.
He groaned; then tried.

The ant climbed up the hill's steep side—and fell.
He moaned; then died.

HELL IS

WHÈRE self must ever live for self,
Concentrate in its narrow bound;
Condemned forever to exhaust
And re-exhaust, and feed again
Upon itself.

Where lust shall never know aught else
Than lust, and lusting, sink in death;
And dying, live to lust again,
Conscious through all eternities,
That lust it must.

Where avarice shall have its gold,
Yea, mountains of it and deep seas;
Shall jaundice with its priceless gold,
And know through all the yellow years,
There is no hope!

Where cruelty shall wake and sleep
In dreams of blood; shall feel . . . shall feel
Its fury rage incarnadined,
And strike and kill in senseless wrath
Without surcease.

Where hypocrite shall mouth perforse,
And know 'tis false, yet mouth again;
And furious, crack dissembling smiles,
And use the pious voice, while hell
Shrieks loud within.

Oh, hell will need no rav'ning flames
Nor pitchforked imps to grill the souls!

Most men have hidden in themselves,
That, not conquered, shall make a hell,
Unspeakable!

THE WONDROUS HARP

FOLKSONG FROM THE SWEDISH

THREE dwelt a peasant by ocean's shore . . .
Young is my life;
And daughters twain he had, no more . . .
Woe numbs my tongue.

The elder was dark as the earth at night,
The younger fair as the sunbeam bright.

And sister thus unto sister spake,
“Let us go to the strand where the surges break.

“And if thou shouldst wash thee a night, a day,
Wouldst ne'er be so fair as I, I say.”

As they stood on the strand,
The elder her sister pushed from the sand.

“O sister, dear sister, help, help to the land,
. And I will give to thee my red and gold band!”

“Thy red and gold band shall be mine, I ween;
But thou shalt ne'er tread on God's earth so green.”

“O sister, dear sister, help, help to the land,
My crownlet so pretty I'll put in thy hand!”

“Thy pretty crown shall be mine, I ween;
But thou shalt ne'er tread on God's earth so green.”

“O sister, dear sister, help, help to the land,
And I will give to thee my true love’s hand!”

“Thy true love’s hand shall be mine, I ween;
But thou shalt ne’er tread on God’s earth so green.”

“Then carry my greeting to father at home;
I drink to my bride’s-night in ocean’s white foam.

“And give to my mother my love and farewell;
I drink to my bride’s-night on ocean’s long swell.

“And unto my lover say fondly good-by;
On the white sands a-dream in my bride’s-bed I lie.”

A minstrel there dwelt where the surges sound;
He looked to the sea, and the dead he found.

He went to the strand, raised the maiden fair,
And made of her body a harp so rare.

He fashioned therein her white breasts round . . .
Ah, the harp shall have a magical sound!

And the maiden’s fingers dainty and small,
He fashioned thereof the harp keys all.

He took the gold of the maiden’s hair,
And spun therewith strings for the harp so rare.

Then he went with the harp to the house of the
bride,
New-given in marriage with pomp and pride.

At the first deep chord so weird and wild,
The bride reclined in her chair and smiled.

At the second chord from the golden strings,
They disrobed the bride of her wedding things.

The third last chord the harp doth sway . . .

Young is my life!

A corpse the bride in her bride's-bed lay . . .

Woe numbs my tongue.

IN THE GALLERY

IBSEN

SHE sat, a woman
Most fair to see,
Before a canvas
Of imagery.

What draughts Castilian
She slowly sips,
Tracing the Spanish
Madonna's lips!

While glances swimming
In reverie,
Bespeak fair kingdoms
Of phantasie.

Past eighteen winters,
I came again
To bend at the olden
Days' pure fane.

I saw a woman . . .
Ah, yes, 'twas she!
Before a canvas
Of imagery.

Is't not illusion?
She paints again
The same Madonna
From far-off Spain.

She sits and labors
For bread, apart;
Paints altar-pieces,
And tourist-art.

She works and drudges
Day after day;
Desire long vanished,
And locks grown gray.

Yet glances swimming
In reverie,
Bespeak fair kingdoms
Of phantasie.

INDIFFERENT

FROM THE GERMAN OF J. STURM

THE wild-bird sings,
And asks not who hath heard.
Forth well the springs
Nor wait for praiseful word.
Flow'r-petals part,
Nor query, Are we fair?
Take heed, O heart,
Be thou, too, without care.

KISMET

I AM the seventh son, and seven moon-shields
Had turned the arrows of the sun away,
When I was born; . . .
My sire the seventh brother
Of thrice two uncles;
And my grandsire gray
Saw light upon the great Hegira day, . . .
Hence am I prophet, and I can . . .
“ Friend, who goes,
Should thither look;
Thou hast a broken nose.”

FRIENDSHIP

TO C. R. B.

A CRYSTAL tarn amid primeval hills,
Profound and clear, untroubled in its deeps;
Where Peace awakes at morn, at even sleeps
Endreamed to murmur'ring of a thousand rills, . . .
Be this a symbol of the love that fills
Our hearts, O friend!

And as the brooklet leaps
In joy adown the rugged mountain-steeps,
Unfettered, free to choose what course it wills, . . .
So be our souls, so sure at last to find
The crystal deep of friendship and esteem;
Across whose surface calm the fragrant wind
Of dear remembrance blows from hills outlined
In purple splendor, on whose summits gleam
Life's rays of hope, far to the east inclined.

MISTS OF EVENING

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

TWILIGHT o'er forest is fallende;
Over the lakes softly sleepende,
Over the reeds . . . wild birds callende . . .
Over the copse it comes creepende.
Red as a lamp of the dawnland
Glows the low moon in the skies;
Out of the dark waters rise
Silvery shapes of gray mist, and

Quiv'rende, tremblende, seethende,
Rove through the marshes low-lyende,
Sweep over reeds, roses wreathende,
Over snake, beast and bird cryende,
Through the long aisles of the swamp trees;
Lean on the gnarled oak's rough breast;
Seek neath the beech playful rest,
Crowned with a garland of beech-leaves.

See there! Enticende, glancende,
Vestured in garments so beamende,
Over the grass lightly dancende,
Strown with dew-diamonds gleamende . . .
Moonlit, see there how she raises
Toward the bright stars her fair arm.
See the white breast soft and warm,
Swell 'neath the garment's fine mazes!

Back the low branches quick spurnende,
Over the gnarly roots leapende;
Lurende, with desire burnende,
Dew-pearls her feet scatter sweepende . . .

Vanished! The mist was no maiden;
Moon, thou'rt a crafty kobold,
Back to thy cloud domain cold!
Dreamt I? Alas, but I waken!

AMORIS FABULÆ

HE was a beast,
And she was a beast;
They loved and dwelt together.
'Twas a beastly life,
But it was not hell,—
Beast-like all storms they weather.

He was a beast,
And she was a soul;
Nay, she was an angel of God!
The vulture fed on Promethea,
She uttered no moan, but steadfast prayed,—
Till they couched her beneath the sod.

He was a soul,
And she was a beast;
A beast of octopus-kind.
She fastened her writhing arms about
His being, and drew the life-blood out,—
Then an angel stole his mind.

He was a soul,
And she was a soul;
And they dwelt in God's paradise.
The skies were clear though the storm-winds swept,
The rainbow shone through the tears they wept,—
They were foolish, and very wise.

YE ANTIENT BALLADE OF SIR ROBERT

UPON a dreary mountain-side,
There went an evening for to ride,
A knight in fulgent armor dight,
His helm plume shook in sunset light.

The wind it blew high, shrill and cold
Athrough the gnarly forest old;
An icy brook ran down a glen
Into a dim dank mountain-fen,
Out of whose dismal, dusk recess
Wild fowl flew to the wilderness.

The sun sank red in a graying sky;
Its blood-beams lay on the mountain high,
Changing the green glow of the trees
Into the light a warrior sees,
When the throaty trumpets scream,
When the sabres clash and gleam,
When ecstatic chargers neigh,
And the squadrons plunge and sway!

Starting at shapes in the forest dim,
At moaning made by a rubbing limb,
Disturbed by the ice-wind's sudden breath
That blew from the charnel-realms of death;
The knight rode on up the mountain drear.

The sunbeams wane, and the stars appear,
Cold white stars with unwavering light,
A light that darkened the coming night;
Their rays made the troubled heart's-blood freeze,
Falling like lances athwart the trees.

The knight, Sir Robert of Saint Denis,
Rode on through the gloom full wofully;
On errand of penance sadly bent,
By Ladye Madelaine thenceforth sent,
Because she had heard that in English court
Sir Robert's mien and fair knightly port,
The heart of a Saxon dame had charmed,
That Robert, too, had not gone unharmed.

Sly Rumor had heard him call her "Mine!"
As the ship lay tossing on the brine,
When the anchor weighed and white sails grew
A snowy pyramid 'gainst the blue.
Sir Robert sware by the holy cross,
By sabre keen, by his shield's bright boss,
That Dame Rumor lied, . . . 'twas all untrue,
A prodigious falsehood through and through!

But Madelaine shrugged her shoulders white;
She saw it not in the self-same light.
If Robert wished to enjoy her grace,
To bask in the sunshine of her face,
He must needs do penance without fear,
At set of sun climb the mountain drear
Wherein there dwelt, so tradition said,
A grim gray demon, ferocious, dread;
Who ranged about when the dusk-light fell,
By steep cliff-side, in the darksome dell.

And, reaching forth with his hooked hands,
Which gripped the traveller like iron bands
He tore his breast till the heart leaped out,
Which the demon grim with a fearsome shout

Engulfed, and threw the lifeless corse
Down the steep cliff-side with rageful force.

And if Robert wished Madelaine for bride,
He must journey forth on the grawsome ride
Up the mountain drear in the cold gray night,
And the gnome strike dead with his sabre bright;
Or if he should ride without meeting him,
And returned to her in the dawnlight dim,
She would wed the knight, and ne'er jealous be
Of ladies fair in a far countree.

Sir Robert bowed to his ladye's will,
Though deep through his heart there struck a chill
Such as tolling bells in a high upland,
On lonely hills where a meagre band
Of mountaineer mourners stand and pray
By open graves in a churchyard gray,
Cast heavily on the grief-filled soul,
As they clang and throb and moan and roll.

Sir Robert kissed his ladye's hand;
Bade that his war-horse 'fore him stand;
And when the light of sun was spent,
Forth on his gloomy errand went.

Across the plain he slowly rode;
The castle lights like red stars glowed.

When tolled the solemn vesper bell,
He turned, as for a last farewell.

The sun was dim; upon the plain
A dust of moonbeams fell like rain,

A mist of shiv'ring, freezing fire,
A crystal cloud of cold desire.
No sound was there, save when an owl
Called to his mate with maniac howl;
Or when some startled beast of night
Crashed through the brush in headlong flight.

And on he rode: the mountain grew
Stupendous 'gainst the star-gemmed blue;
He passed its stony portals grim,
That seemed to groan, "No hope for him
Whose daring foot invades this ground,
Where through the night in solemn round
The spirits of the nether hell
Their mystic incantations tell."

But, undismayed, he held his path;
He matched his will against the wrath
Of all the pow'rs of hell let loose, . . .
Such wonders may fond love educe!

When, riding by the entrance wild
Of deep-set glen, where roots uncoiled
From out the high o'erhanging banks,
Like fanged snakes in venomed ranks,
He marked that by a boulder white,
A strange Thing stood there in the night.

His watchful steed pricked up an ear,
His trembling step betrayed his fear . . .
But Robert drove his spurrèd heels
And gripped the knee, till Hubert feels
That here a master's will is law,
To be obeyed.

Yet 'twas with awe
That Robert neared the unkennt Thing,
Which crouched as though about to spring.

His steed he halted; and the sword
Gleamed in his hand: “Now by our Lord,
And by my ladye whom I love,
And by all saints in heav'n above,
Stand forth! If thou be hell-born sprite,
Then thou or I must die this night.”

No answer came:
A long lean hand
Reached out and shook as in command.

Sir Robert raised the great war-blade;
A fiery circle round he made;
The keen edge cut straight through the wrist, . . .
Yet none the less the grawsome fist
Came through the air, and gripped its claws
Into his side . . . then without pause
There came another hand that tore
Remorselessly his breast and bore
The heart away, and gulped it down.—
Then spake the demon with a frown,
“Accursed race of mortal men,
Beard not the lion in his den.
Think not with tinsel brass and steel
To make immortal spirits reel.
Live out your gnat-like lives below;
Roam not abroad where night-winds blow;
Behold the fate of them that stray
Far from the plainly marked-out way!”

He raised poor Robert's corse and flew
On leathern wing athwart the blue,
Whither a monstrous cliff rose high,
At whose grim base the cross-roads lie.

He threw him down . . . like falling star,
The golden armor gleamed afar;
The demon laughed . . . a sin'ster yell . . .
And straightway vanished into hell!

That night the Ladye Madelaine
Dreamed woful dreams, and dreamed again.

She thought Sir Robert called her, wife!
She swooned to see a bloody knife
Float wav'ring through the scented air . . .
Awoke, and saw it was not there.

But in its stead a wounded dove
Came flutt'ring from the dome above,
Which moaned, "O woman, tell me why
Thou didst condemn thy love to die!"

Ladye Madelaine rose and said,
"My heart doth whisper he is dead.
Strike ye the passing-bell, and toll
For twain, for mine and Robert's soul."

At dawn-break when the sun's red glance
Shot o'er the hill like couched lance,
Wan Ladye Madelaine found her dead,
Where east and north the cross-roads led.

She sighed and looked, and sighed again.—
The sun had set for Madelaine.

ON THE UPLAND

IBSEN

I

WITH knapsack slung upon the back,
And rifle in the hand;
The hearthstone cold, in doors no crack,
Fast-bound with willow wand;
Then yonder to my mother old,
Who dwells in cottage near;
A clasp of hands, brief but not cold;
“I come again with time, as bold
As now, . . . God’s peace, my dear.”

Up through the bay’s thin winding way
That led to forest line;
Behind me fjord and valley lay
In misty moonbeam-shine;
I passed my neighbor’s cottage door,
Where peace had settled down;
But from the hedge deep-shadowed o'er
With alder, dainty sounds outpour,
As leaves that touch a gown.

She stood there, clad in linen white,
And ev’ning greeting gave;
She was so fair, so gently bright,
As heather blooms that wave.
One eye was laughing, but its twin
In shadow peered at me;
I laughed with her and then within
The hedge I sprang, my love to win;
Moist-eyed and still stood she.

About her form my arm I drew;
She blushed, then paled as well.
My wife, I called her, fond and true;
Her bosom rose and fell.
I swore that now she should be mine,
Not partly . . . half . . . but all;
Her shoes she glanced at, I divine,
Leaves rustled on her breast-cloth fine, . . .
Her trembling made them fall.

So fair she begged, I let her go;
We jested as before.
My pulsing heart throbbed blow on blow,
I felt my brain give o'er.
So fair I begged, no word spake she,
We stood enchanted there;
Methought a sea-sung melody
Of elves' and nixies' witchery
Breathed through the haunted air.

We climbed the narrow upland way
That leads where woods entwine;
Beneath us fjord and valley lay
In misty moonbeam-shine.
She languidly, I passion-rent,
Sat where the high cliff whirled;
Our whispers in the warm night blent,
I know not what the whispers meant,
But knew my brow flame-curled.

About her waist my arm I flung;
Within my clasp she lay;

And thus I wed my bride so young,—
Fays sang a roundelay.
If sea-trolls laughed when she was mine,
'Tis as a dream half-gone;
Uncaring if they laugh or whine,
I only knew her shy, divine,
And quiv'ring as the dawn.

II.

Upon the heather, seaward turned,
I watched the dawnlight play;
Above, the glacier fiercely burned,
Below, deep shadow lay.
I saw my mother's house and mine
Sleep peacefully below;
There toiling hath she drunk life's wine;
There hath my thought grown free and fine,—
What more? . . . the gods but know.

She is awake; the thin smoke sways
Drifting upon the breeze.
Meseems upon the grass she lays
The linen 'neath the trees.
Ay, to thy task, O mother dear,
God's blessing with thee bide;
The reindeer on the upland drear
Shall yield thee warmth and winter cheer,—
A soft cloak for my bride.

Ah, where is she? Doth wander far
In dreamland's magic maze?
Let thee the past nor make nor mar,
Veiled in a dreamland haze;

But art thou wakened . . . think no more
Thereon . . . no more shall I;
My gentle bride, be this a lore;
Weave flax and make thy bridal store;
Our church way lies near by.

Ah! hard it is for hearts to part,
That love hath bound in one;
But longing hath a wondrous art
To purge the soul undone.
I stand here with new life inspired,
My pulses calmly beat;
A half-life, . . . nay, one almost mired,
A life where sin and rue conspired,
I tread beneath my feet.

Each gloomy lust, each passion wild,
Is banished from the mind;
Near self and God, I feel a child,
Whose pow'rs new vigor find.
A glance o'er fjord and mountain height,
Beyond the fir-tree's spire;
Then in the reindeer's footprint light,—
Farewell, wife, mother, and good-night!
Above my steps aspire.

III

A redd'ning sky flames in the west
And burns on mountain height;
But o'er the dark'ning valley rest
The mists, and dim the sight.
Dull was my glance and tired my feet,
Reflective-bent my mind;

But where the cliffs the uplands meet,
I saw a blood-red heather beat
And tremble in the wind.

I broke a sprig of heather-bloom,
And twined it in my hat;
Then 'neath a lowly bush found room
To spread a hunter's mat.
And musings came, and musings went,
As folks that churchward go;
They looked about, in swarms they blent;
As judges they a doom forthsent;
Passed silently and slow.

An were I near thee in this stound,
Thou bloom I plucked yestreen;
I'd lay me like a faithful hound
Close at thy feet, I ween;
And in the moisture of thine eyes
I'd purify my soul;
The troll that wretched me with his lies
But yestreen where the alder sighs,
To death and doom I'd roll.

And then I'd spring in triumph up,
To God I'd send a prayer
To fill with peace and joy thy cup,
O thou my bride so fair!
Yet nay, for this too strong am I,
For this too strong and young;
I know a work more nobly high;
Hence, God, heed thou mine only cry:
Let care therein be wrung!

Let rush Thy streams where'er she go,
Thy paths make slipp'ry small;
Thy rocks make sharp that blood may flow,
Thy cliffs let steeply fall;
I'll lift her high within mine arm
O'er waves that foam and drive;
Safe on my breast from ev'ry harm,
I'll banish far all foul alarm,
Together shall we strive.

IV

Far from seaward came he sailing,
Over broad sea-waters sailing;
Meditation round his temples
Played, as lights that gleam far northward.

Weeping moans amid his laughter,
And his lips speak, even silent;
But whereof? I know more rightly
What the wind sighs to the forest.

Of his cold eye am I fearful,
And its depths as little fathom
As the mountain tarn's deep azure,
Fostered at the glacier's bosom.

Winged thoughts laborious wander
Slowly o'er the mirrored surface;
Then again a storm-cloud gathers;
Take a heed . . . the sails reef quickly!

Him I met on upland pastures,
He with hound and I with rifle;

There a pact was made between us,
I would break had I the power.

Wherefor by him do I linger?
From him I would gladly sever;
For I think he hath despoiled me
Of the faculty of willing.

V

Wherefore dost thou long at even
To behold thy mother's cottage?
In a couch dost better slumber,
Than on heather of the uplands?

Home, close by my bedside sitting,
Crooned old mother with the kitten;
Spun and sang till dream-sprites bore me
Out to play in twilight shadows.

Dream, ah dream! . . . but why the dreaming?
Trust me, day-done deeds are better;
Better drain the life-filled chalice,
Than to dream thy father's visions.

O'er the uplands speed the reindeer;
After them in wind and cloud-burst.
Better that than uproot boulders
There below from barren acres.

But I hear the church bells ringing,
From the far sea-sedge uprising!
Let them roll reverberating, . . .
Waterfalls have better music.

Mother old, and she, go churchward,
Prayer-books hidden in their mantles.
Trust me, friend, thou hast a better
Task than treading churchways olden.

Through the hedgerow peals the organ,
Lights are gleaming on the altar; . . .
Grander rolls the storm's wild clangor,
Fairer shine the sun-kissed glaciers.

Well, then come! . . . in storm and cloud-burst,
O'er the upland's snowy surges;
Let who will, the churchways wander,
After them no more I'll follow.

VI

Autumn comes; the bells are tinkling,
Where the herds haste slowly plainward;
Upland freedoms they relinquish
For a life, . . . bound in a stable.

Soon the tapestry hibernal
Hangs in folds from cliffs far-falling;
Soon all paths will be obstructed, . . .
Quickly must I journey homeward.

Homeward? Have I home, where never
More my heart doth turn from wand'ring?
He forgetfulness did teach me;
I have made myself indurate.

Day's deeds have no worth intrinsic,
Those that there below are practised;

Here my thoughts grow strong and forceful,
I on uplands only flourish.

In the lonely shepherd's cottage,
Down I throw my hunter's booty;
There is hearth and crane of iron,
And a free air for my fancies.

Spectres haunt the hours nocturnal;
Huntsmen wise look well before them:
He hath giv'n the gift of magic;
They may tempt, but I am victor.

Winter life on storm-swept uplands
Setteth steel in flimsy fancies;
Never song of bird or flower
Floweth sickly through the pulses.

Here till spring with steel I'll labor,
Then the twain fetch from the valley;
Lift them up from day's dull routine,
Couch them in an upland palace.

Teach them all my new-gained wisdom;
Teach them home to mock with laughter;
Soon shall life upon the uplands'
Ice-wastes be no longer alien.

VII

There I sat for weeks together
Till the solitude grew irksome;
For the mind with battle weakens, . . .
To the dear ones I must journey.

But a day . . . and then ascending,
I will leave her and the mother;
Up unto my highland kingdom
That shall harbor three at spring-time.

Out I must; . . . Ha, snow fast drifting!
Somewhat late have I bethought me;
O'er the upland winter broodeth,
Ev'ry path with snow obstructed.

VIII

The weeks went by; self was crushed I deem;
Home-longing found never a token.
Under icy folds lay the beck and stream,
Over arching drifts struck the pale moon's beam,
And stars shone with ray unbroken.

Too active was I to dully sit
In a room, when days grew clearer;
My thoughts like birds from a cage would flit;
To the cliffs I roamed whereupon 'twas writ:
So far; thou comest no nearer!

In the depths below lay the valley still;
From the sedge came a sound upswinging.
I listened; soft echoes rose to the hill;
Where else did this music my senses fill? . . .
Then I knew that the chimes were ringing.

They rang the birth of the Christmas-tide,
With the bells home-cast and ancient; . . .
A light gleams out where my neighbors bide,
From my mother's cottage a beam doth glide,
That allures, and makes me impatient.

Home with its lowly, poor, mean life,
Grew a legend, rich in beauty;
Here the upland lay, scene of lonely strife;
Below was mother and home and wife,—
Ay, thitherward turned my duty!

Behind me a laugh rang short and dry,
The huntsman strange I greeted;
He had heard the thought, and my silent cry,—
“ Meseems my young friend doth strangely sigh;
Ah, yes, . . . home thoughts,” he repeated.

Then again I stood with a steel-set arm;
And again I felt my power.
On my breast fell the upland’s icy charm,
Ne’er again shall it palpitate tender, warm,
With thought of a Yule-tide flower.

Then suddenly fence and roof grew bright
Of my mother’s lowly dwelling;
First dim as a winter’s morning light,
Then clouds rolled forth in a heavy flight,—
Red flames in a gust out-swelling!

It lightened, then glittered, then low was laid;
With horror I screamed in the gloaming.
The huntsman whispered, “ Why so distractèd?
An old house to ashes the flame hath made,
With cat and the Yule ale foaming.”

He talked so shrewdly in all my woe,
That a shuddering near o’ercame me;
He showed how fairly the flames’ red glow
Tinted the silvery moonbeam’s flow,
And gave to the night new beauty.

His hollow hand to an arch he bent,
His vision's dimness bemoaning;
O'er mountain and fell, sound of chanting went,
And I knew that my mother's soul was blent
With angelic hosts intoning.

" Still were thy labors; stilly endured;
Calm 'mid life's din infernal.
And softly we bear thee to rest assured,
To light and life, thou to-toil-inured;
Thy Yule joys shall be supernal."

Vanished the huntsman, the moon's pale shine;
I strode grief-bowed through the heather;
In my pulsing blood ice and fire combine,—
Yet it can't be denied the effect was fine,
Of the flame and the moon together.

IX

The midsummer day shone fiercely down,
Its heat rays beat on the heather;
And wedding bells rang a-through the town,—
Far, far below, o'er the highway brown,
Folk rode in the glowing weather.

From my neighbor's yard boomed a cannon-shot;
The fences were green with birches;
And folk stood thick near the festal spot,—
I laughed, though the tears ran scalding hot,
As I lay where the cliff's brink lurches.

Methought I heard echo a clamorous call,
And laughter that mocked, upsoaring;

Methought they an infamous song did bawl, . . .
At the heather I clutched where the steep cliffs
fall;
Bit my tongue till the blood came pouring.

From the house they journeyed in pompous flocks;
In her saddle the bride sat lightly;
Down to her loins swept the silken locks,
They gleamed, they shone . . . and my mem'ry
mocks
Me with thought of the night in the valley.

Through the brook she daintily picked her way,
With the bridegroom close beside her;
Then, . . . sorrow no longer my breast could
sway . . .
The strife was ended; I turned away;
There was nothing more to suffer.

I stood on the cliff with a steel-set soul,
The midsummer life below me;
I saw the retinue coil, unroll,
My hand I arched to observe the whole
The better, for I saw dimly.

The fluttering scarfs and the linens fine,
The men's red jackets flying;
The church, with its consecrated wine,
The bride so fair, that had once been mine,
And bliss that now lay a-dying.

All this together, with glance grown keen,
I view from life's heights, and ponder;

A light supernal shone o'er the scene,
But he never knows what it all may mean,
That dwells with the swarm down yonder.

Behind me a laugh rang short and dry,
The huntsman strange stood by me;
“ Well, friend, from what lies before my eye,
Meseems that our parting hour is nigh;
My presence cannot avail thee.”

No, strength of mine own is mine I deem,
But thanks for thy word and action;
Veins quiver no more with tumultuous stream,
And methinks my bosom with sign doth teem
Of a general petrifaction.

The final strengthening draught I take;
Upland cold is a bygone story;
My ship sank swiftly; my life-tree brake;
But see how fairly its red leaves shake
And glow 'mid the birches hoary.

It crashes down, . . . and they vanish fast,
To the sound of church bells ringing;
The tend'rest remembrance is gone at last,—
Farewell; for all have I from me cast,
To nobler vision upspringing.

For now I am steel-set; I follow the sign
That bids me above to wander;
The lowland life is no longer mine,
Up here is freedom, and Life Divine,—
The others grope aimlessly yonder.

THE SPHINX

A KNOWLEDGE-SEEKING youth in ancient lands

And ancient times came, where by Nilus' bed
The awful Sphinx in vigil raised her head,
Nor ever loosed her riddle-wrought commands,
Although for ages past the myriad bands
Had sought her speech, by what she said
To know what life might mean, or where the dead
Forth wander when beyond the Stygian sands.
And by the young man's side, with anxious eye
An ancient stood; an hundred springs had flown
Since life was his, and now that death drew nigh,
He came to seek an answer to his cry.
The twain stood there; the Sphinx at last did groan.—

One cried, "Again!" the other moaned, "I die!"

THE FADED FLOWER

FROM THE DUTCH OF TOLLENS

DAINTY flow'r, where is thy blush?
What fierce heart thy grace would crush
And disdain thee when it vanished?
Dost thou mark its bloom, . . . how tarnished?
Ah, how soon all beauties fade.
Hast observed it, gentle maid?

Flow'r, alas, where is thy charm?
Yestermorn the sunbeams warm

Laid with gold thy velvet petals;
Now thy seeds are choked with nettles,
 Storm-winds rend thy chalice fair.
Gentle maid, oh, have a care!

Hapless flower! Sad and wan
Art thou . . . all the fragrance gone,
That yestern drew us with desire;
Now dying, trampled in the mire.
 And the Zephyr sheds no tear . . .
Gentle maid, think deeply here.

Poor lost flow'r! Spurned in the sand.
And a single cruel hand
Hath despoiled thy beauteous crown;
Wantonly wast trampled down.
 Flow'rs, alas, so quickly fade!
Ne'er forget it, gentle maid.

MUSIC

DIVINE, divine! Sprite of the hymning flames
 That swing in rhythmic splendor round His
 throne;
Sprite of unfathomed seas that roll and moan
And surge against far shores with swoonful names;
Divine, divine! Whence comes thy pow'r to rend
In twain my life with sounds, with simple sounds;
To send my sin-scarred soul beyond the bounds
Of being . . . and then . . . to say, Not yet the
end?

Oh, I have dwelt in other worlds and times;
And known another speech, . . . 'tis echoing

On vibrant air, in harp string quivering.
Ye angels, sing! Ye spheres, sound out your chimes!
Roll, ocean, to a far eternal shore,
Where heaven's choirs chant praise forevermore!

WHEREFORE?

FROM THE GERMAN OF ARNDT

I SAID unto the Dawn, Why gleamest thou
In crimson splendor?
I asked a virgin fair, Why crownest thou
With blooms thy temples?
O Dawn, thy light must fade and pass away;
And, maid, thou too must die as dies the day;
Vain thy adornment!

All this my splendor, spake the Dawn to me,
Is for my pleasure.
What other fate may be in store for me,
I do not question.
He who hath lent the moon and star their light,
Hath vested me in these my garments bright,
Why should I sorrow?

I weave these garlands, said the maiden fair,
Because 'tis spring-time.
Shall woe now blight and sadden face so fair,
Because youth withers?
He who doth hear the feeble birdling's cry,
He who doth bid the flow'rs bloom forth and die,
He watcheth o'er me.

CHORUS MYSTICUS

GOETHE

DEATH-DOOMED creation's form
Was but a token;
Dreams which were fleeting then,
To Life awaken;
That which no heart hath known,
Rises supernal;
Love, to full stature grown,
Dwells there eternal.

SONNET

FROM THE ITALIAN OF M. ANGELO

NOR he, most blissful sculptor, shall have
thought,
That patient marble may not, casting round
It perfect vesture, show within its bound;
Though hands alone achieve when spirit-taught.
The harms I've fled, the boons that I have sought,
In thee, O lady beauteous, are found
Encompassed; I, caught in death's swound,
May never see the vision perfect-wrought.

Yet neither Love, nor all thy beauty's glow,
Nor Fortune, nor thy sternness or disdain,
Would I reproach my doom and failing breath;
For, if within thy heart hide bliss and woe
Commingled, I, poor artist, gain
By lack of knowledge, bitter rue and death.

IMPERIALISM

THE nations rise like billows
 In the dim wastes of dark rolling seas;
A ripple in the vast expanse,
A swell, a heaving pulsing roll,
Caught in the grasp of supernatural force,
Mounting, upsurging, growing in majesty,
It sweeps the leagues along
Till, crowned imperially with all the gems
And radiance of omnipotence,
It thunders up the patient sands of time,
And falls!
 A thousand little ripples hasten back
Into the unfathomable depths of an eternal sea.

AUTUMN

ODAYS when harvesting is done!
 When childless Nature waits for death;
The shroud beneath the pole-star spun,
Will soon descend; with setting sun
The rippling brook shall still its laugh,
And wintry winds shall sigh and moan
And sweep across brown stubble-fields,
Scattering leaves and winnowed chaff!

THE EVENING WALK

WHEN day has almost shut its eye,
 When bats inconstant quit their eaves,
When love-lorn redbreast from the high
Slim poplar chirps an evensong,

I don a thinking-cap and take
A gnarly pilgrim's-staff, and go
In meditation bent, a long
Long way across the wide dim world,
Through shadowed forests where the boughs
Wave to and fro although the breeze
Sank with the setting sun; I pass
By calm deep lakes, by mountains hurled
Straight up to heaven, and I watch
Great eagles wing their winding way
Past domes and pinnacles and turn
To storks, one-legged, mid the grass
Of dark Nile waters; thence I go
My musing way, and stop to list
To waves that sound an organ-note
Profound, immeasurably deep,
Beating against the iron walls
Of cliffs where eider-ducklings sleep;
And then I take an airy boat
And ferry over to a land
Where shattered marble figures stand
Amid the laurel trees, or lie
Soft-couched in myrtle, and I see
The moonshine fall on ruins old,
And hear the moan of nightingales;
Then seven-leagued, I take a step,
Still musing, forward, and I kneel
A stranger at a voodoo fire
In tangled forests of the line;
Another . . . ah! at home once more;
How worn the carpet on the floor!

MY LADY DEAR

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE

SO gently fair, so innocent and true,
My lady dear, that if she others greet,
Their voiceless homage doth her praise complete,
Nor ardent eyes dare for her favor sue.
And when she walks, though lauded as is due,
Still clad in chasteness . . . rev'rent hearts repeat:
Hath here a wand'ring angel set its feet?
Hath heav'n vouchsafed to earth a marvel new?

So witching she, that others as they gaze,
Are conscious that the eye hath cheered the heart;
To comprehend, the bliss must be essayed.
And when she speaks, it seems as if there played
An am'rous sprite in what her lips impart,
Which bids the soul: Look, sigh, and go thy ways.

REGRET

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

THOU shouldst have come,
When the beech stood kingly-drest,
When hope's fair, beckoning verdure
Knew not of the storm's behest.

Thou shouldst have come,
When the buds broke in the spring;
That of the blooms from my garden
A diadem I might bring.

Thou shouldst have come,
When the linden blossomed sweet;
Then hadst thou had a carpet
Fit for thy dainty feet.

Thou shouldst have come,
When the rose sent its fragrance wide;
Then had I woven garlands
Worthy a winsome bride.

Thou shouldst have come, . . .
But the tempests came ere thou;
And what they have left behind them,
I'll offer to no one now.

THE AMATI

THE Master-workman wrought with patient
art,
All in a dusty roof-tree touching room.

Day in and out amid the vernal bloom,
Beneath the gray-drawn skies of autumn gloom,
While winter set its weaving to the loom,
While summer laughed to scorn its distant doom,
The softened sunbeam through the dusty pane
Fell dimly on the Master-workman's head,
And drew an aural circle round his head.

Day in and out with loving tender touch
He labored at his task.
He drew the sinuous lines that gave a form
To heart of spruce and maple,

And with his sentient tools
Cut all the swells and curves and arching ways,
And through the patient days,
Wrought patiently.

At last the task was done.

The western sun
Found a new glory in the golden gleam
From lacquered wood;
The naiad head,
Carved with fantastic grace,
Had almost life!

He laid the strings thereto;
The pliant bow was bent;
And then the Master-workman sate him down,
All in the shadow of his attic room,
And sighed, "At last!"

At last;—and why at last?
No sound had ever echoed through the gloom,
No sound of living harmonies had leapt,
No broken-hearted life had ever wept
Its vanished hopes
A-through those strings;—
Why then, at last?
Why all the days in patient labor spent,
The graying locks, the form with toiling bent?

A step was heard upon the attic stair;
There entered in the Master, wondrous fair,
The Master-player.
He took the pliant even-threaded bow,
And then the instrument; with motion slow

Laid them together,
And with master-hand
Drew forth a note.

An angel's song breathed through the shadowed
room,
And soared up to the stars,
And downward to the bars
That hold apostate spirits to their doom.

The Master-workman smiled a-through his tears,
And bending, kissed the Master-player's hand.
And sighed again, "At last!

"At last the fruitage of the toil-filled days;
The Master-player cometh, giving praise.
Had I not wrought,
He had not come."

AN EPISTLE IN VERSE

IBSEN

My Dear Friend:

You write me in a troubled mood, inquiring,
Why nowadays the world is so depressed;
So listless, nor in peace with zeal aspiring;
As though a fear obscure dwelt in its breast.
Why souls are dead to noble actions wrought;
Why none know why they live, nor whither
wend;
Why each accepts his lot, and has no thought
Than dull compliance with what fate shall send.

Give not, O friend, the riddle for my solving.
I question; but response am not evolving.

But, since your pen has fraternized with ink,
The effort shall not be entirely fruitless;
An answer, inexact, perhaps you'll think,
You have now; let us hope it be not bootless.
In short, I'll answer with another question;
And pardon, since a poet here doth teach,
If he shall use a metaphoric speech.

Now tell me if you ever yet have seen
A ship sail from our coasts across the brine;
And with the breezes sturdily careen,
Setting its course straight forward to the line?
You surely have, and you have surely marked
The joyous life that dominated all;
A tranquil carelessness must have embarked,
The ease that toils, th' authoritative call;
As though the ship were ordered commonweal,
With path prescribed, such as our earth pursues;
With laws like it, whose power all forces feel.

Oft such a ship sets forth for distant lands;
In long migration wanders here and yon;
Its cargo sold, it takes from foreign strands
A new and strange, outlandish lading on.
The ship is crowded full from bow to stern,
With boxes, barrels, bundles stored below;
And neither captain nor his sailors know
What is aboard, nor to its place may turn;
All is commingled, intermixed, and lost!

Again they sail from continent and isle,
The prow cuts bravely through the salty foam;
It seems as though the sea through which they
roam,

Were scarcely large enough to hold the while
The irresponsible and joy-filled life,
Which storm and wind nor lessen nor increase,
'Mong passengers, commander, sailors, rife.

Quite comprehensible. Is the ship not safe?
Is not the cargo stowed away with care?
Are compass, sextant, telescope, not there
To keep the course when tempests rave and
chafe?

Is't not most fair, the virtue at command?
Faith is awaked, and melancholy banned.

And yet, in spite of all, there may betide,
Some sun-lit day while surges calmly glide,
Without apparent cause, a mood so strange,
That joy into dejection soon doth change.
First few are tainted, then the numbers grow,
Till all are burdened with a common woe.
The sails, the ropes, but listless rise and fall;
The bos'n sounds a drowsy, droning call;
Each slight mischance is thought an evil sign,
Though seas be calm, and wind and weather fine.
All's misconstrued; the harmless porpoise-leap,
The petrels' flight that over surges sweep,
Forbode an ill; all with the blight infected,
Yet none complain; the cause is not detected.

What tempest hath shaken the sturdy ship;
What horror has palsied the will, the lip;
The gesture, the word that was wont to trip?
Is danger at hand? Has aught gone amiss?
Not at all; for ev'rything goes along
As before, but now without hope or song.
And wherefor? Because a rumor has sped,
An unnerving fear on each face is read;
'Tis seen in the fo'c'sle, in cabins fine.
They believe that a corpse is on board.

Thus, friend, sails Europe's great ship of state;
With course straight laid for a sunnier land.
With purchased tickets, we're not too late;
On the afterdeck here we stand.
We wave our hands to the ancient shore,
And our brains are cleared by the salt wind's
roar;
Our baggage is safe, though the great ship reels;
The cook and the steward will care for our
meals.

How then could voyage be better begun?
Boilers store up steam, engines smoothly run;
The piston raises its giant beam;
The screw whirls round with a sword-like gleam.
The foresail steadies; the ship straight goes;
All deviation the steersman knows;
We have sea-room to spare, and the man who
stands
On the quarter-deck all of our trust commands.
He watches and guides, naught amiss is done;
How then could voyage be better begun?

And yet, far out where the surges roll,
Midway from home and the longed-for goal,
Meseems that the voyage comes to an end;
For sudden fears with our transports blend.
The sailors, passengers, women and men,
Act as if thrown in a wild beast's den;
Each loses strength, grieves, listens, ponders;
Dejection through fo'c'sle and cabin wanders.

And you ask me wherefor, mine honest friend;
That something would hap did you not comprehend?

Have you not marked Time's business completed?
That with it peace, comfort have fleeted?
The reason therefor is not plain to see,
But you shall hear what I think it be.

On the deck at twilight I sat alone;
'Twas still and sultry, the starlight shone.
The air was calm and gently assuasive;
The winds light, and somewhat evasive.
The passengers wearied to bed had crept;
And dimly the lanterns a night watch kept.
But their rest was broken (to health a bar);
I saw them . . . the skylight was left ajar.
There lies a statesman,—his lips he writhes
To a smile that turns to a yawn in disguise;
A learned professor rolls o'er and o'er,
As though with his own metaphysics at war;
A divine drew the cover over his head;
Another in pillows burrowing fled;
Artists and authors lay high and low,
As folk that dream of an subtle woe.

Through a reddish, steamy, and qualmish heat,
I gazed at the sleepers beneath my feet.

And I turned mine eyes from the doltish sight,
And looked far out in the calm, clear night;
I looked to the east where a dawning day
Had begun to enfeeble the astral ray.
Then a sound there came from the room below,
As I watched the light of the morning grow;
It seemed as if someone had thought aloud,
Half-asleep, with the weight of a foul dream
 bowed:
“I believe . . . that we sail . . . with a corpse
 on board!”

A VERSE

IBSEN

TO live is . . . to war in fear,
 With demons of heart and brain;
To be poet is . . . to hear
 One's lips give self-judgment plain.

THE BRAHMIN'S URN

FROM THE GERMAN OF LORM

O HEART grown poor, to whom the world
 gives nought!
O heart so rich, that ne'er the world hath sought!
The heart is like the Brahmin's begging urn.
His footsteps toward the palace portals turn;

And should the rich bring jewels, fruit, and gold,
And empty, boastful, shrines of treasure rare;
And should all precious things of earth lie
there,—

Not filled the urn, with all the wealth untold,
Until the pure hand of a child shall bring
In off'ring but a lotus-stem or leaf.
Insatiate and unfilled the heart of man,
Though earth therein its plenty freely fling;
Until a breath of spring, a smile, a face
Shall fill the soul, and leave of want no trace.

GYPSY SONG

FROM THE FRENCH OF FLEURIGNY

THE eyes of Elsen were so blue,
They were so blue,
That heav'n itself seemed pale and gray
Like opal's ray!

Her golden tresses were so bright,
They were so bright,
The sun's effulgence seemed to fade,
Became a shade!

Her lips had kisses, ah so sweet,
Like roses sweet!
The shame-faced flow'rets hid from sight
As if in flight.

A day when gazing in her eyes
I saw the skies;
Upon her lips the perfume blows,
Of long-lost rose!

Then from the sunset-land a prayer
Breathed in the air.
I heard the rapid beat of wings,
Of swallows' wings!

They whirled about me quick and slow,
And whispered low;
“ Why dreamest thou? ” they softly said,
“ Elsen is dead! ”

SOME CALENDAR RHYMES

MARCH.

SHRIEK, Æolic slaves, rough-flying
In a whimsic morrice dance;
Whether ye hate Winter dying,
Or would buffet Spring low-sighing,—
Lo, through snow-drifts snow-drops glance!

APRIL.

Days of cloud-burst and of sunlight,
Month of mingled smile and tear;
With a mother's tender love-sight,
Smiling, weeping at the quick flight
Of the young and vernal year.

OCTOBER.

Hail, vintage month! The Bacchanals
March jocund to the purple feast;
In wide-marged basket downward falls
The heavy grape,—the rev'ller calls
With voice inebriate to his priest.

IN A COMPOSER'S ALBUM

IBSEN

OR PHEUS struck with his magic lyre
Souls into beasts, into dead stones fire.

Norway has stones enough, and to spare;
Wild beasts haunt many a caverned lair.

Play, that sparks from the stones may fly;
Play, that the beasts may swoon and die.

ENIGMAS

WHETHER 'tis better to live long years in
days;
To worship that which reeketh not of gold;
To hate what many love;
Upon a strain of simple music
Caught in the street, a-field, a-dream,
To build Iberian castles
Of harmonic speech;
To muse upon a flow'r;
To love a fairy tale because 'tis truly false;
To be in constant warfare, discontent with self;
To know there is, or ought to be, a summit,
And yet to see so many rough, immediate steps be-
fore;
To feel self culpable of few
Or many
Or all of these grave faults?
Whether 'tis better, living days in years;
To fill the food-pouch, and exclaim,
"Ah, life is full! Sweet, sweet content!"

To love the aural circle of a coin,
And bind it to the heart;
To get the ducat's worth,
And often more;
To say, I am the greater man. Behold my purse!
To shout: My God is Tangibility;
To feel self culpable of few
Or many
Or all of these grave faults?

Whether 'tis better to exult in youth;
To say: Ah, life is short, the rose soon fades;
To laugh: Ho, ho! the cup, the dame, the dance!
Let Age go knit its brows, and Winter shriek!
'Tis youth-time, spring-time.
Ho, ho! die Thought! live Passion!
Whether 'tis better, seeking happier mean?
Well, seek it, friend, since you think thereon.

CREATION

FAUST

Raphael:

The sun sings joyous as of old;
The spheres antiphonal reply;
In circling course forever held,
He rolls in thund'ring majesty.
Archangels gaze and gather strength,
Though fathomless the great design;
God's works throughout creation's length
In pristine splendor rise divine.

Gabriel:

With speed immeasurably swift
Earth's glory turns on fiery line;
Day rises with her face uplift,
Then fades, and Night's vast splendors shine.
Oceanic rivers swell and surge
And dash against basaltic shore,
Chanting a mighty fun'ral dirge,
Till sea and shore are seen no more.

Michael:

Storms raise their livid heads, and sweep
Across the trembling lands and seas,
As from the hand of God they leap
To execute His mysteries;
The flaming lightning strikes a path;
The groaning thunder rolls along;
Yet these Thy creatures fear Thy wrath,
And dare not wander into wrong.

The Three Archangels:

Archangels gaze and gather strength,
Though fathomless the great design;
God's works throughout creation's length,
In pristine splendor rise divine.

THRENOS

A SPRIG of euphrasy for weary eyes;
A word of love for hearts worn with life's
care:
Obsequious gentle tears for him who dies;
For us who shall abide, patience to bear.

AT PORT SAID

IBSEN

A N eastern day
O'er the harbor rises;

The pennons sway
With the wind's emprises;
The waves that glisten,
Bear song afar;
The cannon christen
The last-dug bar.

The steamers glide
Past the obelisk;
While from ev'ry side
Flies the day's news brisk.
The rhyme I furnished
For bipedal fools,
The critics demolished,
According to rules.

The poison gnats stung,
Making mem'ry impatient; . . .
Thanks, stars, heaven-flung,
My home is the ancient!
We the ships passed with cheer,
Where the anchor lines drag;
I brandished my headgear,
Saluting the flag.

To the banquet away,
In spite of the reptiles;
As the guest of the day,
Past the Bitter Sea isles.

Night's shades gather round,
And my dreams are thus shaped;
How Pharaoh was drowned,
And how Moses escaped.

THE SILKWORM AND THE SPIDER FABLE

FROM THE SPANISH OF IRIARTE

AS a silkworm slowly wove his web of beauty,
Said a spider who was hastening through her
labor,
Proud herself of all its evanescent splendor,
Mocking him for dull persistence in his duty,
“What hast thou to say, Sir Silkworm, of my
spinning?
Knowest thou that I began it, dewdrops glitt’ring,
And at mid-day in the sun-glow ’twill be ended?
Mark its fineness, mark its gleaming silken text-
ure . . .”
Said the silkworm, slowly pausing in his labor,
“Thou art right, O friend. At mid-day ’twill be
ended.”

GENTLE KIRSTEN FROM THE DANISH OF HEIBERG

THE surges fall with a sullen roar,
Gentle Kirsten stands on the ocean shore,
Her glance sinks deep in the billows blue
To espy what hither she never knew
All in the cooling sea-surges.

Oh, is it then true, that my father told;
A potentate bides in the sea-deeps cold;
His slaves live and build in a realm profound,
Sheltered so safe in the ocean's ground,
 All in the cooling sea-surges?

There rises a castle so vast, so high,
Like a silver mist is the lofty sky,
The sun and moon are of red, red gold,
The meadows a thousand of pearls infold,
 All in the cooling sea-surges.

A being dwells in the castle deep;
It knoweth as I to laugh and weep;
A human heart throbbeath in its breast,
Desire it hath that may never rest
 All in the cooling sea-surges.

And, if the merman's so very wise,
He kenneth the meaning of love's surprise;
Ay, surely hath loved with a love profound,
Hath stilled his longing with harp-string's sound
 All in the cooling sea-surges.

Thou merman, be gentle, be gracious and kind,
So sorely with love hath been racked my mind;
In mine inmost heart there a fire hath rout,
Ay, burneth so fierce I would put it out
 All in the cooling sea-surges.

Gentle Kirsten sinks where the waves run fleet,
The merman kisses the rose-lips sweet;
Gently the ocean hath given rest,
The name of Christ sighs from anguished breast,
 All in the cooling sea-surges.

FRITHIOF'S SAGA. THE PARTING
FROM THE SWEDISH OF TEGNÉR
FRITHIOF AND INGEBORG

Ingeborg:

O Frithiof, Frithiof, shall we part like this?
Hast thou no sympathetic glance to give
Thy childhood love, no tender clasp of hands
For her whom thou didst love in bygone days?
Thinkst thou I stand on roses here and laugh
My life's one perfect happiness away;
Tearing; unpained, forth from my breast the
hope
That grew fast-rooted, with my being's growth?
Ah, wast thou not my poor heart's morning
dream?
Why ev'ry joy I knew I called it "Frithiof;"
And ev'ry noble thing, and all that bore
The mark of grandeur, stood there in thy like-
ness.
Dim not its glory; look not with stern eyes
On her, fate's helpless victim, who doth give
In sacrifice all that she holds most dear
On earth, and in Valhalla's lofty halls.
O Frithiof, costly is the sacrifice,
And word of comfort well enough deserves.
I know thou lovest me; I have always known
Thy love, since life began to have a soul;
And Ingeborg's fond thought shall follow thee
For many a year wherever thou mayst roam.
But thou?—war's clangor drowns the voice of
woe;
"Tis lost amid the tumult of the storm,

Nor dares to linger at the victor's feast,
Living anew heroic deeds of war.

Yet, sometimes in the holy hours of night,
When thou shalt think again of long-gone days,
There will appear a wan face from far lands,
Remembered yet,—and it will greet thee, love,
From those dim shores,—the image of the maid,
That dwelt long, long ago in Balder's realm.

Thou must not bid begone, but whisper soft
A word of peace and solace; and the winds
Of faithful night shall waft it here to me,
Mine only comfort, other have I none.

For me, there's nothing to distract my grief;
In all that doth surround me it hath voice:
The temple's mighty arches ever speak
Of thee alone; the image of the god,
That should reprove, smiles like thee in the
 moonlight;

And look I to the sea, there thy swift keel
Cuts foam-strown path to shores beyond my ken;
And look I to the grove, there stand encarved
The runic letters of a maiden's name.

The bark grows over them; they fade away;
And this, the saga tells us, bodes of death.

I ask the day-beam when it saw thee last;
I ask the night,—response there cometh none;
And e'en the sea that bears thee, hears my cry,
Sighs grieving to the shore, and answers not.

Yet shall I send with ev'ry sunset glow
A greeting to thee o'er the flame-tipped wave;
And heaven's ships, the clouds, shall take on
 board



The mournful plaint of thine abandoned love.
Thus shall I sit here in my maiden bow'r;
The sombre widow of my life's delight,
And broider broken lily stems upon a cloth,
Until some day spring weaves its em'rald web,
And broiders fairer lilies o'er my grave.
But, if I take my harp, and try to lull
To rest my endless pain with its deep tones,
My heart doth break a-weeping, as e'en now. . . .

TO MY FRIEND, THE DEMAGOGUE

IBSEN

YOU say I'm "conservative," and I say,
I now am what I have been alway.

I'm not to be caught by the chess-board lure;
Turn the board over-end, then you have me sure.

But one revolution I ever knew
Not the work of a charlatan half-baked through.

It was the diluvian revolution;
Surpassing all others in evolution.

That time even Lucifer got the slip,
For Noah, you know, took the dictatorship.

My radical friends, let us do it again,
And better; but talkers are needed, and men.

You weep for the floods as they drown e'en the
Credo,
While I 'neath the ark will locate a torpedo.

THE SANDMAN

THREE'S a gray old man
With a long gray beard,
All clad in a robe so gray;
Who lives in a cave
Far under the sea,
Where the misty mermaids play.
And he dwells alone
In the deep-sea cave,
Where the sea-weeds gently sway;
And the gray old man
In his long gray robe
Is at work the livelong day.

When the stars grow pale,
When the rosy dawn
Lies low on the eastern hill;
Then the old man wakes
From his sleep profound
In the deep-sea cavern still;
And he rouses up
And begins his task,
To be done, come good or ill,
When the sun sinks down
In the western wave,
And the stars the dark skies fill.

Then, a silken bag
And a silver sieve
He takes in his aged hand;
And a golden spade
He doth grasp, and hastens
To the shell-strown ocean strand;

All the day he toils
In the sun's hot rays
Where the sea doth touch the land,
Till the night is come
And the silken bag
Overflows with white sea-sand.

Then he casts his spade
And the silver sieve
Far away in the billows blue,
Where the mermaids wait
To carry them back
To his cave when the task is through;
But the gray old man,
In the gray, gray robe,
Hastes away when falls the dew,
To the sleepy land
With his sifted sand,—
Soon, soon he will visit you.

And the crystal sand
He doth strow about
In each pair of drowsy eyes,
Till the curfew bell
Sounds o'er hill and dale,
And the crescent moon doth rise.
When the world's a-dream,
Then his labor's done,
And he turns 'neath the star-lit skies
To his deep-sea home
Where the sea-weeds wind
Long ribbons of many dyes.

And the mermaids sing
A soft lullaby,
Till the Sandman goes to sleep, . . .
Then they hush their song,
And they float away
To their homes in the ocean deep.

MAHMOOD, THE SULTAN
FROM THE GULISTAN OF SHAIK SÂDY

A KING of Khorasan
Saw in a dream
The mighty Sultan Mahmood in his tomb.
His body turned to dust;
His eyes alone
Rolled in their hollow sockets mid the gloom.

The King of Khorasan
His wise men bade
Make clear the portent of the visioned dead;
The sages stood there dumb, . . .
At last there came
A dervish, who, obeisance making, said:

The Sultan looks about,
And groans to see
That others rule where once he ruled, O King.
Ah! many men of clay,
Grown to wide fame,
Have died, whose names the poets never sing.

The name of Nufhirvan
Is still held dear
In hearts of generations long since born;

Nufhirvan's blessed name
His gen'rous soul
Hath made belovèd, nor by time is worn.

Account thy life as gain,
Do good, O man,
Ere yet the rumor flies, "He is no more!"
Else in thy narrow room
Forgotten, thou
Shalt turn to dust as Mahmood did of yore.

PATIENCE

H AST heard of water falling drop by drop
Upon indurate stone
Day after day, age after age,
Falling, a paltry drop, but without stop?

Hast seen the snow-flake floating in the air,
Fall on the ledge and melt,
Yet flake on flake unceasing come, . . .
And waked, to find the fields no longer bare?

Hast watched the ant with egg climb up the hill,
Roll headlong down the steep,
Time after time, yet undismayed
Persist and try again, persisting still?

Take heed, O heart, with ant-like patience turn
Undaunted to thy task;
The rock was rent, the field was blanched,
And thou—though dying—yet shall reach thy bourn.

THE ASSASSINATION OF LINCOLN

IBSEN

A SHOT has been fired in the distant west,
That Europe with fear doth hear.

Ho, ho, what life hath dilated the breast
Of the puppet-throng far and near?
Thou ancient Europe, with word and rite
And law for each action wrought;
Time may not lay on thy fame its blight;
Thy virtues 'gainst evil bravely fight;—
Pale hues though, thy features caught!

The eagle and unicorn don the crape,
And all of the beasts in kind;
The steamers in mourning their pennons drape;
Despatches fly like the wind.
And "glory's" scions, and cotton-kings,
The thousands that live on lies,
Seek the palm of peace, poor, deluded things,
When a pistol-shot o'er the wide world rings;—
'Tis the man among knaves, that dies.

And now ye know fear! Europe's state conclave,
Is this as it ought to be?
What Prussia wrought; Dybbol's half-dug grave;
All part of Time's history.
The ravens pick not at their brothers' bones;—
Think ye of Poland no more?
Hath England forgot Copenhagen's groans,
The ramparts of Flensburg, and Sonderborg's
moans?
Why grieve ye now, not before?

The blood-scarlet flower that yonder blooms
And frightens you with its leaf,
Was seedling in Europe's hot-house rooms;
The Union knows whence its grief.

Ye planted a sapling, the fruitful tree,
That crimsoned the far-off west;
Ye bound yourselves, in your subtlety,
The bloody ribbon of chivalry
On Abraham Lincoln's breast.

With oath forgotten, with broken word;
With treaties whose terms ensnare;
With promises shattered ere scarcely heard,
Ye have dunged the acres that bear.
And ye've waited with minds quite free of blame,
A harvest of noble sheaves;
And the seed hath grown! See its hell-fires flame!
Ye wonder, nor know where to turn for shame;
For daggers grow there, not leaves.

Where right is made with a bowie's gleam;
Where scaffold-law's doom is heard;
Truth's dawn shall more surely in glory stream,
Than here where we kill with word.
One will keeps watch, and its judgment falls,
And crushes each lie at birth;—
But the serpent first through the egg-shell crawls,
And Time must writhe till its woe appalls,
With the parody of an earth.

There ruleth a spirit with pow'r supreme;
Ay, challenge him an ye will!
The "golden house" through the dust doth gleam;
Nero's statue lies shattered still.

But Rome should first with its crime increase,
Conjoining the sundered poles;
While despot ruled with the despot's peace,
And Cæsar's image gave life new lease
In the Romans' putrid souls.

Then all was demolished; the circus, hall;
The temples, the columned roofs;
The arcades, the arches, were trampled small
Neath the oxen's iron-clad hoofs.
Then 'twas built anew where the old was found,
And the air was pure for a time;
The hour of renascence now doth sound,—
The pest stalks forth from the spongy ground
And draggeth about its slime.

Yet, if in the slough of corruption we go,
I wail not in misery
Over the poison flow'rs that blow,
Boastful on Time's old tree.
The serpent must gnaw ere the shell may break;
Roof and wall shall not fall away;
Let "systems" with writhing and horror shake;—
Vengeance the sooner its thirst shall slake
With the doom of a judgment-day.

MY BABYKIN LOVE

A FAT little hand on a round chubby wrist,
A dimpled and dirty, begrimed little fist;
A fair little face with brave hazel eyes
Whose innocent glance seems to fathom the skies
And read what is hid in the unknown above.

A wan little hand from all earth-stain quite free,
A thin little face smiling no more on me;
The golden curls sweep o'er a brow veined and
 fair;
The lips part in silence. . . . Good God, I de-
 spair. . . .
A last kiss, my baby, my babykin love!

A BIRD SONG

IBSEN

WE went a gladsome spring-time day
 Through garden-walks forgot;
Enticing as a riddle
Was the forbidden spot.

The west wind whispered softly;
I marked the sky's deep glow;
On linden branch to nestlings
A mother bird sang low.

I painted poet-visions
In gorgeous color-schemes;
Two brown eyes shone a-smiling,
She listened too, meseems.

Above us there was sounding
A chirp like laugh of wren;
But we, . . . we bade a fond farewell,
Nor ever met again.

Now, when I lonely wander
Through walks where roses blow,

Because of feathered small folk
No peace or rest I know.

Dame Sparrow sat and listened,
As we the path walked through;
She made a rhyme about us,
And set the notes thereto.

And all the birds intone it,
Where shade with shadow plays;
Each tiny throat doth voice a tune
Of gladsome spring-time days.

LOVE IN THE OLDEN DAYS FROM THE FRENCH (1520) OF MAROT

LOVE held simple sway in the good old days,
Sought not costly gift, lived in careless ways;
And the dew-kissed flow'r, plucked by lover's hand,
Had more worth than the jewels of sunrise-land.
For heart spake to heart in those sunlit days,
And heart sang to heart in love's guileless praise,
And love was a fire whose benignant rays
Only darkened at Death's command,
In the good old days.

Now love is despoiled of the charm of old;
False tears and deceit pay the fool fool's-gold;
Why then at its feet should I lay my heart?
In the love of to-day hearts have no part,
And I sigh o'er the tales the poets told
In the good old days.

MY SONG

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

MY song is not the majestic,
Eternally flowing stream;
But rather a timorous wood-brook
That laughs where the beeches gleam.

Liefer through coppice twilight,
Pathless, it finds a way;
Nor ever by city and castle
The soft-singing waters play.

My song is the murmuring wood-brook,
That shrinks 'neath the summer sun;
Hibernal storms must replenish
Its source, that the brook may run.

My song is the timorous wood-brook,
But it flows to the sea's embrace;
And shall find it as well as the river,
That rolls through a wider space.

RESTLESS

A WAY with rhymes! Give me a round of beef,
A beaker filled with brown October ale.
Bon appetit! No, I had just as lief
Chew sawdust and drink water. Think I'll sail
An hour or so about the bay,—but why?
Can't say,—don't know,—care less.
At least I'll spend
An hour watching the aimless clouds float by,
Calling myself for pastime,—just an ass.

I won't. I'll read awhile a well-thumbed book.
Books? I'm satiate with these musty tomes.
I'll ramble in the fields and by the brooks,
Or look abroad for woodland elves and gnomes.
Too lazy? Yes, I think I am. I'll sit
Here in the quiet shade and watch the gnats,
The restless gnats through restless sunbeams
flit.
“Hip, hip, hooray!” . . . Confound those fiend-
ish brats!
I have a firm belief they never sleep.
There they go . . . howling . . . yowling . . .
down the . . . street. . . .

OBSERVER.

He's nodding. There! He falls in slumber deep!
Let's hope repose will make his temper sweet.

LEILA

I STOOD within a bosky shade
At noon.
The spring's white waters played
Across the fine, firm sands.
Down through the glade
Came Leila;—
Grew soon unarrayed,
Yet more adorned and luring.
Then like a sunbeam sank.
A flame-edged blade struck to my heart
I fled . . . but would have stayed.

THE BATTLE-FIELD

MAN'S life is as a field of battle, set
With fierce opposing, peace-defiant arms;
Nor day nor night may calm the wild alarms,
The strife sways on unhindered, without let.
Above one host fly banners black as jet,
Bearing emblazonry of many harms;
Above the other wave the magic charms
Of golden stars wrought in a snow-white net.

Man's days and nights, each dull thought and its
deed;
The words that seemed so much and were so small;
And mem'ries bitter, sweet; these are the glaves
The pirate host straight heartward swiftly speed.
The angel host nor flinch nor tim'rous fall;
Hope's shield each keen point turns; Hope's ban-
ner waves.

THE CONQUERORS

FROM out the gloomy shades of time they come;
From caverned eyeballs leaps the lightning's
glance;
Yet ever silent stride the marshalled hosts;
The war-lords, irresistible, advance.

The cry of brazen trumpet, roll of drum,
Tell that they come; but dominative will
Needs no loud herald to announce its course,
It moves alone, the void of time to fill.

Immitigable men, sculptors of history,
Who carve with blades of steel and lances keen;

Straight forward looking from the awless brow,
Ye need no voice to tell us what ye mean.

Embodiments of awful destiny,
Glory and pow'r rest in your mailed hands;
Ears ever closed to human shriek and moan,
With adamantine will ye lead your bands.

March on! march on! Heed not the ghastly forms
That lie in pale array along your path,
Masses of clay wrought into men-like shapes,
Made ashes in the fierce fire of your wrath.

March on! The charger's heavy iron hoof
Drips with the stream of life from human hearts;
On, on, but know that blindly ye but play
By God Almighty's will your sev'ral parts!

THE MIND

FROM THE GERMAN OF JERSCHKE

NAUGHT in the world can vanish into nothing,
Of Something always Something there remains;
To other forms forever ever changing,
With space and time another pattern gains;
The leaves bud forth, mature, and pass away,
The nations flourish and with time decay.

One only mid the waves of change is steadfast,
Progressing ever through all life and death;
Its mighty curve, unmeasured and uncompassed,—
Rears high above time's flood o'er all with breath;—
The arch the mind hath built, of long devising,
Whose span, begun on earth, toward God is rising.

THE FISHER

FROM THE DANISH OF BÖDTCHER

A FISHER calmly pondered,
And over the boat's edge gazed he;
He saw where fishes wandered
Deep in a lucent sea.
Among them there a form he spied,
That clad in golden mail did glide.

With craft he grasped his angle,
Thereon set most enticing bait,
And slyly let it dangle
Where eager fishes wait;
They nibbled at it without fail,
But not the one in golden mail.

Again afresh he baited
The hook, and sank it 'neath the wave,
Not long the fishes waited,
But greedy nibblings gave;
He quickly drew them o'er the rail,
But ne'er the one in golden mail.

The daybeams farther wandered,
The sun sank deeply in the west;
And all the lures were squandered,
That pleased the gluttons best;
The twilight shadows spun a veil,
That first bedimmed the golden mail.

Then grew he right downhearted,
That all his hopes were come to naught,

When at a voice he started ;—
“ Perchance this time ‘tis caught ! ”
And see, there glittered ‘neath the wale,
As in despite, the golden mail.

Quick dashing waves asunder,
His hand sank to the aural charm ;
When two fair hands from under
The sea twined round his arm,
And swan-like from her pearl-strown home
A mermaid rose above the foam.

The sea gave of its sadness
To love’s light in her lustrous eye, . . .
In moonstruck silver madness
Waves round her white breast sigh ;
Adown her shoulders tresses flow,
Like fine-spun gold on fallen snow.

“ What fear hath seized upon thee ? ”
Her rose-lips smiled ; “ ‘Tis I am bound
Fast captive,—dost not love me
In this dim twilight stound ?
My golden mail was wistful prize,
Am I less pleasing in thine eyes ? ”

She gazed upon him straightly,
His name she whispered soft and low ; . . .
He bent like reed that lately
Hath felt the sea wind blow.
They sank beneath the darkling stream,
That onward flowed. . . . All seemed a dream.

SADNESS AND HOPE

FROM THE DUTCH OF GENESTET

SET fast in life's firm foundations,
Piercing deep within the heart
Sadness bideth,

Pain doth dart;
But Hope's gentle consolations
Comfort yet man's storm-tost heart.

With its strife-, hope-, grief-strown pages
Life's short lesson soon is o'er;
Watching, working,
Waiting for
The enigma of the ages,
Life—solved; and forevermore.

SOULS.

SOME souls are oceanic.
Winds blow
Across the waters;
Whence? They nor none else know.
The moon, the sun,
And stars hid by the closèd eyelids
Of the night,
Bend over them.
They rise and sink
In tidal genuflexion,
And dash their brows against
The grim reefs of the world.
Simoons sweep over them
And they rage in white fury,
Nor know why,—but rage.

The clouds are rolled;
And sunlit slumber rests upon the deep.
They groan despairingly,
Nor know why,—but feel
A lightning send its bolt
Down to unfathomed depths;
And close the wound,
And murmur indistinguishable songs
Unto the sun.
Barriers they suffer
For years and days;
Then turn
And rend them.
The waters of such souls are
Forever salt;—and so are tears.

Some souls are lakes
That sleep among hill-summits;
Pure crystal untroubled waters,
Whose depths are seen,
Not always reached.
No tides;
One knows whence came the ripple,—
The south wind blew;
Or zephyr from the west;
Or e'en the cold north wind.
At dawn they offer up,
Fire-worshippers,
A vap'rous prayer,
And then abide a little peaceful day.
The stars set jewels upon them;
And the clouds wrap draperies

To hide their nakedness.
And from the calm expanse,
Perchance a rippling stream
Flows seaward.

Some souls are mud-pools;
Pestiferous;
Steaming in the heat.
Vermin wallow there,
Until the sun hath scorched all moisture forth,
And left a clay-cracked earth.
Yet even they
At dawn,
Will breathe a wavering prayer
Heavenward.

Some souls are rivers;
Flowing steadily
Down to deep waters.
They know the tides come from the sea;
And flow to greet them.
And many burdens bear they on their breast.
At morn they also pray.

Ay, all these pray,
Unknowingly.
And forces elemental bind them in a ring
Of interdependence.
The cloud that rises from the sea
Hath food for lake and pool;
The brook, the river run down to the sea,
And die, and are re-born;
And die, and live again.

ALBUMBLATT

CLEMATIS, clinging to old gray stone-wall,
Op'ning its dainty bloom to Indian airs
Neath autumn skies, seems not so fair as thou,
Solacing an old man's sunset hour.
Thy sweet eyes smile upon the wrinkled brow,
And straight the furrows vanish in thin air.
Nay, child, I am not busy. Welcome thou!
Come to thy father's arms, so strong for thee;
Ever with welcome for "my little girl."

THE HUNTSMAN

FROM THE DANISH OF ERIK BÖGH

I SAW him at morning through green forests
faring,
So youthful and handsome, so joyous and daring;
He rivalled in singing the birds as he passed,
His song was so merry,—ah, me, 'twas the last!

I saw him at noonday where waters lie sleeping;
We met in the wood 'neath the branches low-sweeping.
He plead for a kiss . . . ah, his wiles held me fast,
For he whispered so softly, "It may be the last!"

In meadows I found him when stars were outshining,
Life-stricken and pale, on the greensward reclining.
Ah, never a look from the eyes downward cast,
Yet his lips drew me on with a smile,—'twas the last!

And now when the night winds are mournfully
sighing,

In dreams once again I behold him there lying;
I moan in my grief what my heart guarded fast;
O fair love, O fond love! the first . . . and the
last!

THE SPARROW

IN autumn and winter the sparrow strove
For food,—a crumb was a treasure trove.

He fled the urchin, horse-hoof, and cat;
He fought for place on the window-slat.

'Mid snow and sleet, in storm and clip,
He held to life with a death-like grip.

In spring the sparrow had symptoms strange;
'Twas neither pip nor a dog-caught mange.

He flew with straws to a near-by tree;
With twine built a house that was odd to see.

He mated for love,—nay, think no ill!
He loved and wrought with a lover's will.

All summer five hungry mouths he fed;
In August five from an old nest fled.

Autumn and winter came once more;
Then spring and summer, just as before.

The diff'rence 'twixt sparrow and thee and me,
Is the diff'rence 'twixt me, the sparrow, and thee.

And the diff'rence 'twixt thee, the sparrow, and me,
May be great as the astral infinity.

(In the last two stanzas there's food for thought;
Unriddle me this, as a thinker ought.)

The sparrow loved life, loved love, no more;
But the sea of the soul hath a farther shore.

COMPLICATIONS

IBSEN

THERE stood in a garden an apple-tree,
 And the snow of its blooms was fair to see.

A bee bustled busily round about;
To an apple-bloom all his soul went out.

And each lost the peace of his heart and mind,
But sought in betrothal repose to find.

The bee journeyed forth on his summer round;
But on his return, he a calyx found.

The bee was in anguish, the calyx grieved;
That it naught availed may be well believed.

Close under the tree in a stone-wall house
Lived a poor but virtuous little mouse.

He sighed, but in secret, O calyx fine,
My cellar were heaven an thou wert mine!

Through forest and mead roamed the faithful bee;
The calyx was fruit when he turned to see.

The bee was in anguish, the fruit was grieved;
That it naught availed may be well believed.

Close under the eaves like a basket hung
A nest, and therein a sparrow sung.

He sighed, but in secret, O fruit so fine,
My poor nest were heaven an thou wert mine!

The bee was in anguish, the fruit was grieved;
The mouse grew peevish, the bird's breast heaved.

But life went on, and no help was there;
Save only with patience the thing to bear.

Then the fruit fell down and burst in the grass.
The mouse died, sighing, Ah me, alas!

And they found that the bird in his nest had died,
When they bound the sheaf for the Christmas-tide.

When the bee stood alone, the hedges were bare;
All vanished were summer-time's blossoms fair.

Then he went to his hive, where his grief grew cold,
And he perished at last as a wax-maker old.

This woe were untold had the bee but grown
To a mouse, when the bloom and its leaf were
flown.

Had the mouse been but bird, when the fruit hung
low,

What joy might have been, we shall never know.

MADRIGAL

FROM THE SPANISH OF CETINA

EYES limpid and tranquil,
If ye be so praised for your glances' soft lan-
guor,
Why upon me do ye gaze in such anger?
Were ye more gentle,
More witching ye were to him that beheld you.
List not to passion's cue,
Lest ye should lose all your magical beauty.—
Ah, torments ungentle!
Eyes limpid and tranquil,
Though gleaming with anger, at least look upon
me!

CHATTERTON

WRENCHED, torn with genius and a pride
whose glance
Shot back the lightning's flame,—thou strange sad
child,
Gone mad with inspiration but a babe;
An atom which the great world juggernaut
Unheeding crushed. Jehovah sent a fate
To flay thy soul;—Jehovah knoweth best.
The baker shut his door, and said, No bread!
Then, “for experiment” thou totterdst forth to beg
The poison grains, and in thy lonely room,
Moaned, poor lost waif,—My mother, fare thee
well!
And in the darkness lay thee down to die.

FLIES

FROM THE SWEDISH OF TAVASTSTJERNA

WE struggle like flies 'gainst the window-pane,
Though wings wildly beating, inside we remain.

We buzz and we creep, we clamber and fall;
Again we begin, for out would we all.

There yon is our home where the sunlit walls
gleam;

There winds sing of freedom, and nature's supreme.

Once again we storm 'gainst the pane in a rout,
Ah! sometime 'twill break, can there be any doubt?

The other flies dart where the table is spread;
There most of them gather, by appetite led.

They gorge the dessert, in a cup drown their past,
Cast shame on the linen, and multiply fast.

Round platters the rabble their revels begin;
We dash 'gainst the windows and hum ourselves thin.

We live for the sunbeam, without it we die,
'Gainst the window—the window, despairing we fly!

GRATITUDE

IBSEN

HER woe was the spirit
That warned me to flee;
Her joy was the angel
That said, Follow me.

Her home is the ocean
Of freedom and light,
That mirrors the poet's
Wandering flight.

Her race is the changeful
Elfin-like throng,
That trip through the morrice
Dance of my song.

Her aim is the setting
My spirit on fire,
That none may extinguish
The flames that aspire.

Because she expects not
That I should repay,
I pen, and have printed
This thanksgiving lay.

JOY AND SORROW

FROM THE GERMAN OF KOHL

NOT yonder in life's storm and hastening throng
Can bud and bloom the soul's fair subtle
flower;
The mystic harmonies of sincere song
In consecration find alone their power.
There yonder where the world with yearning cries
For gold and laurel, thou shalt ne'er discover
Felicity nor grief that deepest lies;
Through silent lonely hours alone they hover.

THE DONKEY AND HIS MASTER

FROM THE SPANISH OF IRIARTE

THE stupid public neither knows nor cares,
Whether of worth, or worthless, be our
wares.

I give them chaff because they praise it well.
Thus spake a vulgar writer to repel
A critic's sweeping censure of his play.
A poet, who o'erheard the weak reply,
The cunning sophist thus began to flay.
He said: A donkey daily got as his supply
Of aliment, a bundle of coarse hay;
Wherewith his master said, with scornful eye,
Take this, thou fool, since with it thou'rt content.
At last the beast, his anger long in-pent,
Replied well-vexed: That which you choose to give,
O unjust man, I take that I may live.
Of oats a heaping measure I could eat,
And should prefer to this coarse stubble-straw.

Oh, ye purveyors of the public meat
In matters rational, heed ye this law!
If ye give not the people grain to eat,
Forsooth, to live, they must digest your straw.

AN OLD STORY

AN ancient painter, famous in his art,
Sought once to make a picture where no part
Stood less than perfect. Done, within the square
Where lounged the idle crowd 'twas placed, and
there

Was hung a placard which, politely phrased,
Requested each to mark what less he praised,
Or found defective. When the day was done,
The artist saw his work with marks o'errun.
Again 'twas painted and again 'twas placed
Where lounged the crowd, and now therewith was
traced
In civil phrase, the prayer that each should mark
What pleased him most. And, when the day grew
dark,
Again the artist came, and found each part,
Erstwhile condemned, commended for its art.
He smiled, and softly sighed, "O whimsic race!
Ye praise and ye condemn with equal grace."

HERO AND LEANDER

A BYDOS saw the sun
On Sestos redly fall;
The wheeling sea-gulls call,
Night! night! The day is done!
The day is done; the pall
Of storm-clouds low'r,—and one
Stands where the surges run
Like coursers to the ball.

From temple to the shore
The feet of Hero fly,—
Ah! if he come no more!
A flame shot through the sky,
And Hero saw her dead
Smile at the lightning's red.

HIC JACET

THE troopers rode forth on a day,
To the fight, tirelay!

The sabres gleamed dazzlingly bright,
As they swayed in the light.

The troopers returned from the fray,
At the end of the day.

The sabres were tarnished with red;
Ranks were thinned,—some were dead.

The living were greeted with cheers;
For the dead there were tears.

A monument leans to the sky;
And the dead, there they lie.

Two sisters there were, and they fed
On a needle and thread.

One, half-idiot; the other was brave;
And they toiled, life to save.

They toiled through frost, storm and drouth;
And life's aim,—fill the mouth.

Their needles gleamed dazzlingly bright,
As they swept through the night.

After years the idiot died;
Then the other,—she died.

The Field of the Potters is nigh.
There they lie.

NIGHT THOUGHTS

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

I KNOW you, O ye thoughts, that stir and wake
Like beasts of prey beneath night's shadow-pall;

With tiger eyes, and crafty feet whose fall,
The solemn, awful stillness doth not break.

I know the path your lissome bodies take,
Dull-glancing through a jungle rank and tall;
And how the smould'ring eyes show where ye all
Have crept to point of vantage in the brake.

And though I know the day that ye are free,
Will lay both earth and heaven desolate,
Yet still with you my idle fancies play.

They wanton with the death-flames heedlessly,
As children with a fire-work's lustrous fate;
While hidden heart-blooms parch, and fade away.

ESKIMO CRADLE SONG

ICY surges wildly rolling,
Wildly rolling, rolling.

Under-sea bells deeply tolling,
Deeply tolling, tolling.

Sleep, sleep, sleep.

Shut thy greasy little winkers;
Shadows creep.

Close those restless, restless blinkers;
Go to sleep.

Great white sea-gulls hoarsely shrieking,

 Hoarsely shrieking, shrieking.

Polar icebergs dully creaking,

 Dully creaking, creaking.

Slumber, sweet,

With thy frowsy head against my breast;

Gray fox fleet

Bring thee slumber soft and rest;

Wild waves beat.

Hear the great bear fiercely growling,

 Fiercely growling, growling!

After tid-bits he is prowling,

 He is prowling, prowling!

Shut thine eyes!

Fear not, blubber-filled-up baby,

Round us rise

Icy walls,—he shall not harm thee,

Though he cries.

List to mother softly crooning,

 Softly crooning, crooning.

Hear the north wind wildly tuning,

 Wildly tuning, tuning.

Sleep, sleep, dear.

Let me kiss thy baby fingers!

In the drear

Northern ice-land love yet lingers,

And is here.

THE SUN

FROM THE FRENCH OF LEMIERRE

EFFULGENT mighty sphere, vast shining
shoreless sea,
First source of warmth and life, far-flung immen-
sity;
Through all the ethereal plains thy beams are
thrown,
From heaven's twining heights to ocean depths un-
known;
These circling floods of air, alone thou movest
round,
These fires of vital force where nature's life is
found;
O thou majestic sun, impregnate with thy ray,
The universe grows fair, entrancing 'neath thy day;
All movement is reborn, all distance and all space;
Thou risest, life hath come; thou sinkest, death hath
place.

THE STEEDS OF GRAVELOTTE

FROM THE GERMAN OF VON GEROK

HOT was the day and bloody the fight,
Cool came the even and calm was the night.

Down from the edge of the wood to the vale
Thrice rang out wildly the bugle's shrill wail.

Calling so loudly, calling so stern,
“To the flag! To the flag! O ye troopers, re-
turn!”

By squadrons, by files, by twos and by threes,
The troopers obey the wild notes on the breeze.

But not all,—there are some who never come back;
They lie with glazed eyes in the battle's mad wrack.

They the reveille heard,—they were lusty and
young;

But retreat found them pale, with their heart's-
blood outflung.

Over the battle-field horses run lost;
Empty the saddle, the bridle loose tost.

Thrice rings the bugle's wild note on the breeze,
Thrice o'er the plain from the shell-splintered
trees.

Look, where the black yonder pricks up his ear!
Red flame the nostrils, he neighs loud and clear.

See, there the bay comes ranged at his side!
Forward he leaps, as when ranks swept in pride.

Even the gray, with the blood-spattered flanks,
Limping on threes takes his place in the ranks.

By squadrons, by files, by twos and by threes,
The riderless horses advance to the trees.

Riders and horses know well the loud call;
When shrieks the wild bugle, they're there, one
and all.

Three hundred riderless horses were found;
Lifeless their masters lay prone on the ground.

Over three hundred,—ah, bloody the fight,
When at the even the steeds rode so light!

Over three hundred,—heroic the band,
One of each four never heard the command!

Over three hundred,—O steed knightly brave!
Unguided thou turnst where the battle-flags wave.

When ye the heroes recall 'mid your tears,
Laud too the steeds of the king's dragooneers!

LA LUNE DE MIEL

ADOWN a murmur'ring argent-rolling tide,
Begemmed with quiv'ring moon and starry
sphere,
Past dim and ancient cities, where uprear
The domes and pinnacles of human pride;
Past mist-hung reedy shore and darkling isle,
Where moans the melancholy nightingale,
The lovers drift with silken purple sail
Unfurled, as down the lotus-loving Nile
In distant days, the dark Egyptian queen
Swept with her fair-haired Roman.

On they float,
Soft down the murmur'rous tide. The carven boat
Soon bears the Venus-worship from a scene
Which lies a fairyland before the eyes.
The prow cuts deeply in the white sea-foam, . . .
They sail away to some fair unknown home,
We turn away from dreams and lovers' sighs.

TO THE NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENT

IBSEN

KNOW ye men the
Legend olden
From tradition's night,
Or has it escaped ye,
Egil's march to Jaemte's
Jarl ferocious,
For the ransom
Of the Norse king's gold?

Egil's men grew
Fear-full, false-true,
As he onward strode;
Cravenly they left him,
Where the jarl lay aiming
In the green fields,—
Blood-red roses
Bloomed along the way.

Then an awless
Frown of anger
Swept o'er Egil's brow;
Close his foes were pressing,
As he stood defenceless,
Caught in ambush,—
The tradition
Tells a miracle.

Mountain slate-rock
From the cliff-side
To his breast he bound
With the bark of timber;

Strode, with none to follow,
'Gainst a jarldom,—
And the iron,
And the jarl's heart brake.

And he met the
Jarl and treasure
Safe within his hall ;
Friendly was their discourse,
Ever filled, the ale-cup ;
Peace was uttered.
Never since then,
Egil's ruin was sought.

Freedom's children,
By the people
Called from hill and dale,
Egil's is your mission ;
Honor such as he gained
In the legend,
Shall be your meed,
If ye stand as he !

ODE

FROM THE ITALIAN OF G. ROSSETTI

O H, how dark the night down-sweeping,
Banished stars, no moonbeam sleeping !
Sobbing winds and troubled ocean
Moan, evading, seeking rest,
As if giving voice to sorrows
Pent within an anguished breast !

Hail, thou fair Italian heaven;
Deeply glow thy Pleiads seven;
And thy smile, O Italy,
Turns to where they burn above;
Witch-wound by their soft effulgence,
All within thee breathes of love.

Not enough though, thy persuasions,
Flow'r-wrought meads, deep-set stellations;
Round thee coil a tyrant's foldings,
Close about thine heart they lie,—
Of what worth, if rapt with anguish,
Verdurous earth and azure sky?

O Britannia, land of glory,
Potent spouse of Neptune hoary,
Though sad mists swirl down thy mountains,
Grim oppression bides not there,—
Let the light be dark, Egyptian,
So I dwell with freedom fair!

Through the gloom my thought upsoaring,
Doth behold truth's sun, outpouring
Glorious beams no false eye seeth;
Hidden is the sacred fire:
With such glory rapt, transported,
Satiate is my heart's desire.

Liberty, Truth's gentle mother,
Here is regnant,—and no other
Gives to man felicity;
Through these shadows I behold her,
And ecstatic, cease my wand'ring,
To remain,—her worshipper.

OLD SONGS

I SING the song of the living,
 Of the rush of the atmospheres;
The gasp of the new-born crying,
 Gazing far down the stretch of years
On gyral worlds and their wonders,
 The ocean, the dim wood, the hill,
The dreams, the hopes, and the blunders,
 The sound of the voice, small and still.

I sing the lilt of the loving;
 Of the rise of the ocean tide;
Of the lack, the need, the longing;
 Of the flow of the river wide
Whose waves run thither and crossways,
 Till, merged in the long even swell,
The ship leaps free of the coast maze;
 Landmarks fade; far at sea; all's well.

I sing the hymn of the dying,
 When the watchman's dull rattle sounds;
The rigors ever fast creeping;
 The soul struggling free of its bounds.
I sing the dead and the deathless,
 Of rivers that silently glide;
Of seas unfathomed and breathless,
 A-swell with eternity's tide.

TO THE READER

FROM THE GERMAN OF LOGAU

R EADER, how do I please thee?
Reader, how dost thou please me?



NEBULOUS STARS

IBSEN

A JOURNEY to far-off lands I made,
To find me a hearthstone warm;
When lo! in the heavens with stars inlaid,
Cepheus' daughter a new guest greets.

The news came down to our ancient earth,
That above in the astral realm,
To a star old Chaos had given birth,
As the laws of attraction bade.

Here below, another chaos I find,
Cross-purposes, adverse wills;
Whose parts no laws of attraction bind,
Whirling aimlessly round and round.

As again I stand in the distant calm,
I am warned by what I have seen;
The sight hath given my heart a balm,—
The nebula, grown a star.

Nebulæ, meseems, though formless yet,
Chaotic rise in the North;
And ere earth's day shall forever set,
They will blaze in star-glory forth.

INGRATITUDE

INGRATITUDE, thou slimy serpent cold,
Whose fangs leave scars that ever bleed anew;
Thou adamantine rock whose horrid sides
Thrust back in scorn the waves of human life,

Of human love,—nay, e'en of love divine.
Thou savage sword that pierceth to the heart
Of men, and like a flaming brand doth burn;
Thou basilisk with steely-glancing eye;
Thou monster grim, that hath no memory,
Or else with demon will remembereth
To laugh to scorn thy silly dupes and fools;
O sin unmeasured! Anger's deeds,
E'en wrongs devised, may be ascribed to lust
Of wealth or pow'r or passion's sudden storm;
But he who is ungrateful must with aim
Remove from day to day all gentle thoughts
Of good received, of favor done, and e'er
With devil's grin deride the feeble souls
Beneficent.—Grin on, thou whelp of hell!
Hast thou no conscience, then art doubly damned.

BENVENUTO CELLINI

FROM THE SWEDISH OF SNOILSKY

“CELLINI,” said the king, “enough hast
played;
To trinket-making thou too much art prone.
Cast thou a Jove, whose equal none hath known.”
Thus Francis spake. Cellini heard, obeyed.

Already o'er the mould the red bronze swayed,
Forth from the furnace rolled with hiss and groan;
When, heaven! . . . there's not enough! rang out
the tone
Of wild despair,—Cellini gazed, and prayed.

Nor only prayed,—but hurled into the fire
His choicest pieces, till the god stood there
A masterpiece, of masterpieces cast.

Thus perish youthful dreams and fond desire;
For sacrifice must be, if we would bear
In life or art the laurel wreath at last.

BIRD AND BIRD-CATCHER

IBSEN

BOY-LIKE, I, of pine well-seasoned
Cut a trap when yet a youngster;
Ere I'd counted ten, a songster
Fluttered in and lay imprisoned.

Then the trap with grawsome gladness
To the nursery I carried;
Him with menace unto madness
With my grimaces I harried.

When my cruelty was glutted,
Sated too my lust for pleasure;
On the table edge abutted,
I the door oped for my treasure.

Ah, how wildly beat his pinion!
He saw life and freedom given;
To the sunlight flew the minion,—
Fell, by cruel cage-bars riven.

Hapless bird, thou art avenged now;
For thy captor lies in bondage
In a cage whose bars of sorrow
Hold his flutt'ring soul in bondage.

There an eye glares through the warders,
Where the barrings close assemble;
And its glance his mind disorders,
With its horror he doth tremble.

When he thinks the door is swung
Wide, with freedom at the portal . . .
Bruised and faint, the hapless mortal
Dashes forth,—and back is flung!

FIRST LOVE

FROM THE SWEDISH OF RUNEBERG

I QUESTIONED once my first love in this
wise:
Star of my life, how camest thou to shine,
And whence dost get thy mild enchanting light?
The star made answer: Hast thou ever seen
How soon a fleeting cloud obscures my ray?
I said: Though light-illumined or in gloom
A cloud may rise to hide thee from my sight,
Thou shin'st with unlost splendor as it fades.
Again the star did speak, and said: Hast seen
How soon an earth-born day makes dark my beam?
I said: Full many suns I've seen arise
At radiant dawn, and cast thee in the shade,
To wane again, but thou dost never die.
Then spake the star: And dost thou trust my light,
And wilt thou kindle with it life's fond hope?
I said: Beyond the cloud thy glance hath smiled,
Beyond illusive sunlight thou hast shone,
And thou shalt shine for me beyond the grave.

Then said the star: Wouldst know then what I am?

A sigh am I that breathed from thine own breast,
And sought in tranquil peace a higher world;
A sudden lightning I from thine own life,
That leaped in flame up to its natal sky;
A sunbeam am I from thine inmost soul,
And in my gentle splendor dost thou live.

DE PROFUNDIS

THE rumbling surges of a mighty sea
Roll groaning up the flinty sands, and grind
Their shapeless weight against the boundary
And pause a moment's space,—then slowly find
A foam-strown path back to a sullen sea.

Through ledgy caverns in the purple deep
Roam shark and serpent, cruel, gaunt, and cold;
O'er bloody coral plain, down chasm steep,
Chimeras of the ocean wind and fold
In hungry coilings, mariners asleep.

Beneath the spumy waters' surface grim,
Uprise the whit'ning masts of deep-sea wrack;
Against their bulwarks strike with echo dim
Poor wasted bones and skulls, that sometimes crack,
And feed with marrow, shapes which thither swim.

The dull moon lowers down an amber beam,
Then hides affrighted in a swirling cloud;
The gray gull sweeps away with ghostlike gleam
And shrieks across the waters shrill and loud,
As might an evil demon in a dream.

Old Ocean's surges chant a threnody;
A miserere moans upon the wind;
The baleful storm-clouds lighten fitfully,—
Woe waiteth on the sailor who shall find
To-night his ship adrift the trackless sea!

Down, down a hundred fathoms he shall fall;
Among the shells and corals he shall lie;
The silent depths shall spread for him a pall
That ne'er may be uplift for mortal eye,
Until the blaze of doomsday shines for all.

CHILDHOOD'S SONG

FROM THE DUTCH OF V. LOVELING

THE song that lulled in childhood
My heart to dream anew,
Hath melody that echoes
The fleeting long years through.

And when I hear one singing
The simple old sweet song,
The hearts that loved and cherished,
Return in spirit-throng.

The voice once more I hearken,
That sang the dear old strain,
When western sun shone dimly,
When moonbeams came again.

When stars glowed deep in heaven,
When swallows ceased their cry,
When all the world grew silent,
And slumbered 'neath the sky.

Through twilight crept the music
Of solace-laden song,
Like to the winds a-sighing
The river-sedge along.

It soothed my heart to dreaming,
As doth the far-heard bell;
That chimes for dying sunbeams
A faint and fond farewell.

O sweet, O gentle accents,
Oft have ye moved my soul,—
Of joy-filled days long vanished,
My heart takes passing toll.

O simple dear old music,
Heard now, ah, nevermore,—
Still in my heart it lingers,
Abides there evermore.

INFINITY

FROM THE ITALIAN OF LEOPARDI

ALWAYS this solitary knoll is dear to me,
This shelt'ring round-encircling pale, which
shuts from view
The farthest dimmest reach of sea and earth and
sky.
Here sitting, lost in contemplation, endless space
And sovran silence and a calm, vast and profound,
I weave into my dreams, and by degrees
My heart grows unafeard. And as the moaning
winds
Go sighing through the shadowed forest, I compare

All infinite silence with the whispering sounds
That haunt the woods; and sink into an ecstasy
Of thought abstruse; gaze at the ever-during years
And æons of eternity, and on the past,
Long dead and gone, and muse upon the living time
And on its song. And in this wide and soundless
sea
My thoughts are merged and sunk and drowned like
shipwreckt men,—
Ah, sweet is death and shipwreck in a sea like this!

BIOGRAPHY

SWEET jingles of nursery rhymes,
Sweet thoughts of far-away times;
Then was ignorance bliss ever new,
And life was a fairy-tale true;
Oh, bright was the glance of an eye!
Oh, wondrous the wonderful sky!
And the stars bent at night
O'er a plump little wight,
A-dream to a soft lullaby.

Strife and striving,
Joy and grieving;
Storm-winds driving,
Haven-leaving;
Patient waiting,
Long enduring;
Hopes abating,
Distant mooring,
Voyage-riven.

At last all striving done!
At last the battle's won!
Old heart, sleep thou in peace,
Thy toils forever cease;
The vernal flow'rs shall bloom
In beauty o'er thy tomb;
The river shall flow by,
The stars glow in the sky,—
Take thou thine ease!

WITH A WATER-LILY

IBSEN

SEE, O sweet love, what I bring thee.
Flow'r with white-winged petals gleamy,
Borne upon the clear, calm water,
It hath floated, Spring's fair daughter.

Wilt thou bring it home to rest,
Place it, dear love, on thy breast;
'Neath its petals, sooth, there hide
Waves, where calm and peace abide.

On life's river, guard thee, maiden.
Dreams thereon are danger-laden;
Water-sprites but play at sleeping;
Lilies to and fro are sweeping.

Heed thy breast's life-stream, O maiden!
Dreams thereon are danger-laden;
Lilies to and fro go sweeping;
Water-sprites but play at sleeping.

THE CHOIR INVISIBLE

IBSEN

NEVER, never art thou like Him,
For of flesh thy life was born;
Do His bidding or deceive Him,
Equally art lost and lorn.

Worm, thou never shalt be like Him,
Though with death thou shouldst be one;
Follow after or deceive Him,
All thy labor is undone.

Never, dreamer, art thou like Him,
For thy legacy is lorn;
All thy wealth shall not enrich Him,
Thou for earth alone wast born.

TO A ROSE

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

O ROSE, thou fairest of all flow'rs! The beams
Of nascent dawn thy cheeks have tinged
with red;
The dewdrop's kiss and what the night wind said
Have waked thee, dainty bloom, from thy fair
dreams.
Thou ne'er hast known the weight of care and
dread,
Thy ward through midnight hours each bright fay
deems
A chiefest joy; and when the round sun gleams
At dawn, the silver dew doth crown thy head.

Thy stem, more lithe than willow of the brook,
Bears proudly all thy charms beyond compare
Into the golden sunlight of the day.
Could any soul upon thy beauty look,
And wish to end? Such deed I would not dare;
Thy chaliced splendor warns my hand away.

THE MINOR POETS

THE Lark's wild ecstasy bursts on the breeze;
In song triumphant o'er the mist-wrapt trees
She soars up to the paly Stars, ere swing
The temple gates of Dawn, and Slumber flees.

In champak groves where flow the soundless streams,
The Bulbul chants unto the lunar beams
The hopes, the joys, the woes of heart oppress
With Love's dull anguish, Love's half-conscious
dreams.

These Singers greet the Daybeam, and the Shade
Of champak grove and waters star-inlaid;
And yet, the lonely Trav'ller o'er the plain
Turns now and then, and lists to songs not made

By such Arch-singers. When the sun beats down
On dusty ways, when far off lies the town,
The Inn where purpling grapes hang o'er the door,
He heedeth then the songsters without crown.

The low moan of the Thrush that fearsome flies;
The Wren's staccato, who as fearless tries
Alluring notes to lead him from the nest
Where all her treasure in concealment lies.

The blithe chirp of the Sparrow greets the ear;
He turns, the more the Robin's lilt to hear,—
These are the Minor Poets, gentle Friend,
With patience list, they sing a fleeting year.

They sing, and pass away; and where before,
A song, a shadow fell athwart the door,
Is silence and a void: oblivion breeds
Its myriad worms,—the low note's heard no more.

THE BROOK

THE beck of the mountain breaks forth from
the fountain
Uncaring and merry;
It bounds and it dashes, it ripples and plashes,
Through cavernous woodlands
It sings and it murmurs,
It dreams and it slumbers in pools where the sedges
Implore it to reckon
The green leaves which beckon
And flutter the greeting of forests primeval,
But on ever jovial
It runs and it dances,
And though with sweet glances, with noddings and
tremblings,
The amorous flowers
Peep out from their bowers,
Sir Brook will not tarry;
“ Good-by, dears, be patient,
Farewell, forest ancient,
I must hasten along,”
Runs ever the song.

MINE OLD MEERSCHAUM

MINE old meerschaum! A quiet hour with thee,

Reposeful ending to laborious day,
Is sweet. Come hither, friend! I'll fill thy bowl,
Thy gen'rous bowl, with dusky perfumed leaf,
And lay my lips to thy clear amber lips,
And warm thy vitals with a glowing coal,
And blow a curling wreath to Auld Lang Syne.

I'll raise about us thickly rolling clouds
To hide us from the world's too-anxious eye;
We'll haste Olympusward to muse and dream,
Or dwell in some far-distant starry sphere
In commune sweet, where nothing shall disturb
The silence of our thought, nor break upon
The lotus-eaters' fantasies and dreams.

Old friend and tried! From out thy kindly heart
I draw a solvent for the many cares
That vex life's ways; nor yet hast thou e'er failed
To lend much comfort to my troubled soul.
Thine honest visage, browned with many heats,
Doth smile with joy when eventide is come.—
Old friend! A curling wreath to Auld Lang Syne!

CHAUCER

QUEYNT maister dere, and fader of our songe,

Ful many a yeer hath swowned sin thy swete tonge
Hath holde him still; though gerful be the tymes,
With frendly hertes singen we thy rymes,

TO MY BOOK
FROM THE GERMAN OF OPITZ

AND wilt thou leave my careful fost'ring hand,
Thou little book, to meet a flouting fate?
Hast heard no laugh with jibe and scorn vibrate,
Nor writhed beneath the critic's venom'd brand?
All now must cater to the world's demand;
That it be good, with worldlings hath no weight,
The most of them but live to execrate;
What pleases not, goes exiled from the land.

And yet, that thou mayst bear no further change,
Nor yet some fresh revision bold and strange,
With benediction, forth I bid thee roam.
Go hence, since so it pleases thee to go;
And suffer judgment; thou the world shalt know;—
'Twere better been hadst thou stayed close at home.

GHASEL
FROM THE GERMAN OF HERMANNSTHAL

FAIR sings the nightingale, and knows it not;
Soft shines the lunar beam, and knows it not;
The marble bears the artist's soul-deep thought
In proud humility, and knows it not;
The cloud drops dew,—to blooms unnumbered gives
Life and refreshment, and knows it not;
A song's enchantment soothes an aching heart
And mitigates its grief, and knows it not;
And Suleika is noble, fair and good,
And all without a choice,—and knows it not.

AT AKERSHUS *

IBSEN

SUMMER twilight's veil in gentle
Foldings swathes the earth in slumber;
Lonely stars in silent grandeur
Paly glow through cloud-mist drifting.

And the sea's repressed emotion
Gains a voice in smothered moanings;
List! like songs of distant childhood
Ne'er forgotten, moan the surges.

Akershus, the ancient, gazes
Calmly through the mists far seaward;
Nods as friend to friend in greeting,
So I think, to Hovedöen.†

Akershus, the white-haired ancient,
Certes stands in dreams deep-sunken;
Surely at the rough oar bending,
Mounts the stream of days departed.

Ay, they dwell with him, those vanished
Men of old with blood-plashed gauntlets;
Swathed in linen, swathed in grave-cloths,
Through the halls they silent wander.

Ha! look there! I turn, and shiver;—
Glacial, then with flood volcanic
Throb my veins,—there in the window
Of the hall a blue flame glimmers!

* Royal castle near Christiana.

† Island near Christiana containing the ruins of a monastery.

Who is he, the knight so silent,
With the eyes that glow so redly?
He who in the hall so grimly
In the great arm-chair leans forward?

Ha! 'tis he in sooth, King Kristjern;
Brow deep-furrowed, cheek deep-sunken.
For the sword his hands are groping;
Blood-rust stains the ancient scabbard.

Like a dream of days majestic,
Cere-bound, yet with mien of princess,
On the dais stands a woman,—
Certes spouse unto Knut Alfsons.

Danish ships lay in the offing,
And her husband, without weapon,
Went to plead his country's welfare,
Came as guest to Gyldenstjerne.

. . . To the strand they bore him, murdered;
Without song, unlit by taper;
And the wound in Alfsons' forehead
Entered deep the heart of Norway.

See yon fast-bound man in mantle;
Light to guess his name and station;
Full-armed stand a hundred war-lords,—
Herlof Hyttefad shall die there.

There the pile in Ormegarden;
Blood-fleckt wait the cere-cloths ashen;
Menials four stand by the coffin,
Kristjern peers behind the curtain.

Thou, who rich, yet sought the freedom
Of thy people 'mid death's roses;
Than all incense sweeter rises
Steam of blood where thou wast tortured.

Martyr-blood from days of evil,
Thou art seed vouchsafed to Norway,
Which, three centuries thereafter,
Bloomed a spring-time day at Ejdsvold.

And see there! Nay, no more dreaming.
For, "The guard!" the sentry shouted;
Akershus its vestment ancient
Changes for to-day's dull costume.

WILD BLOOMS AND HOT-HOUSE FLOWERS

IBSEN

"**G**OOD friend, I cannot understand your
choice.

What use are eyes if not for vision?
No beauty she, and reason given voice,
Her style, methinks, excites derision."

Yes, 'twere more consistent, I will admit,
With to-day's life-drama blending,
Had I chosen my dame of a type more fit,—
A society type unbending.

They stand on parade like winter-reared blooms
So showily in the window;
Like potted plants warm-earthed in rooms,
They green in the air of the stove-glow.

Through repose, as by rule, each drooping spray
Grows young after riot festal;
Ay, were I but sage, my heart I'd lay
At the feet of the "normal" vestal.

But then, of what use the logician's head?
His voice is raucous and heartless;
For she's a wild bloom, was in freedom bred,
Counts but sixteen summers so artless.

THE EIDER-DUCK

IBSEN

THE eider-duck in the northland dwells,
Where the cliffs upsoar, where the gray tide
swells.

He plucks from his breast the down to keep
The home full warm where his nestlings sleep.

The fisherfolk seek till the nest they find,
And they rob it of all with a careless mind.

More gentle the bird than the fishermen,
He with down from his breast lines the nest again.

And come they once more, he will bare his breast,
And build, far from harm, his beplundered nest.

But rob they him thrice of his dear-bought home,
In a vernal night he afar will roam.

With a bleeding breast through the mists he'll fly
To the south, to the south, to a sunlit sky.

IMMORTALITY

THE light of sun and star may pass away;
The soul, it shall not die.

The down-sweep of the seas may cease for aye;
The soul shall never die.

I come some whence,—
The mind doth not yet know;
I go some whither,—
And as I came, I go
Undying, deathless.

The space I heaven call may burn
A spark in universal flame,—
The soul shall live.

The astral worlds to star-dust may return,
Strown through infinity,—
The soul shall live.

Sun, heaven, stars, and seas
Are clay, set to a form;

But thou dost know the soul be more than these;
It passeth not.

Disease may blast the sprightly youthful frame;
Old age may rend its vigor,
And remove
Communication 'twixt the soul and what
The world called, "him";
The heart may cease to throb,
And death come whisp'ring to a darkened room,—
'Tis but a mask,
A chrysalis
Of bygone summers;
Now broken, for the dweller-in hath flown.

The atheist may mumble in his sleep,
As body, soul :
But he that marks creation's wondrous curve,
Knows that his soul
Soars, falls,
To high or lower plane,
So as he wrought.

Beyond is paradise or hell,
Each to his own ; self-wrought.
There shall he live.
He cannot die ;—

Until the day shall come again perchance,
For yet more infinite transition.

THE MIRROR

FROM THE GERMAN (1625) OF OPITZ

THOU sayst the mirror be deceitful thing,
Conferring charms no truthful knave would
sing ;
Come, wilt thou know he telleth thee no lies,
But look upon the image in mine eyes !

ARCHITECTURE

UPON the Khiva plain beneath the sun,
The golden sands a-through my fingers run,
And build a house the wind soon sweeps away.
“ Child,” saith my father, swarth of beard and eye,
“ Life is a house like thine of sand when done ;
Its moments golden ;—but we all must die.”
“ O father, let me build ! ”
“ Ay, child, build on ! ”

THE VILLAGE GIRL

FROM THE SWEDISH OF RUNEBERG

THE sun sank down, the gloaming came,
The fair midsummer gloaming;
A glow of pallid purple lay
On hut and hill, whence roaming,
A troop of weary, care-drooped men,
With day's long labors worn,
Each task completed, turn again
To homes they left forlorn.

Each task completed; harvest done,
And 'twas a costly reaping;
A bold and hostile warrior band
Led captive, or left sleeping;
At morning when the sun rose up
They marched forth to the fight;
And when they homeward turned their steps,
'Twas darkling into night.

Close by the field where raged the fray,
The fierce tumultuous fighting,
Anear the road a village lay,
Made waste by war's foul blighting;
Upon a lowly cottage-step
A maiden sat to see
The troops advance, go marching by,
In peace and victory.

She saw, as one that seeking, sees;
None know whereon she's musing.
Upon her cheek a color burned,
Too bright for dusk's transfusing.

She sate so still, and yet so flushed,
Intent upon the men,
That had she listened as she looked,
She heard her heart beat then.

The troops march on, they turn the road;
She watched them march away.
On ev'ry rank, on ev'ry man,
Her questioning glances play;
A question, trembling and afraid,
A question without sound,
More dumb than e'en the sigh she drew
Within her breast's full bound.

But, when they all had passed her by,
When ranks went on unbroken,
She lost her calmness then, and grief's
Dull anguish found a token;
Not loud she wept nor sobbed; her face
Lay hidden in her hand,
And great round tears ran down the cheeks
Where flamed a crimson brand.

" Why weepest thou? Be not downcast;
Our hopes are not yet vanished;
O daughter, hear thy mother's voice,
And let vain tears be banished.
He whom thine eye hath newly sought,
And found not in the band,
He lives, he thinks of thee and lives,—
Forsooth, 'tis love's command.

" He thinks of thee, he heeds my plea,
Nor blindly goes to battle.

Such was my murmured parting-word
When shrilled the drum's loud rattle.
Constrained, he joined the troops; his heart
Yearned not to seek the fray;
I know he will not die and leave
Life's joys,—and us to pray."

The maiden looked a-trembling up,
Awaked from sorrow's dreaming.
'Twas like a flash of evil light
Athwart her sorrow gleaming.
She tarried not, she looked away
Where long had raged the fight;
Sped to the road and silent fled,
'Mid shadows lost to sight.

An hour went by, another came,
The twilight fast was deep'ning;
The silver clouds swam far above;
Beneath came shadows creeping.
"She tarries late! O daughter, come!
Vain, vain is thy unrest;
To-morrow ere the sun comes up,
Thou hast whom thou lov'st best."

With silent step the maiden came,
Where stood the mother waiting;
Her eyes were bright, the storm of tears
Its rapid flood abating,
But cold her hand in greeting stretched,
Cold as the midnight breeze;
Her cheek was whiter than the cloud
That floats above the trees.

“ Dig me a grave, O mother dear,
Life's little day is riven;
Forth from the fray with shame he fled,
To whom my heart was given;
Of me he thought, of self he thought;
Gave to thy warning worth;
Betrayed his comrades and the land
Of his ancestors' birth.

“ When came the troops, and he not there,
My tears his fate were plaining;
I thought he lay upon the field,
A hero's glory gaining;
I sorrowed, but my grief was sweet,
Such anguish I could bear;
And I would live a thousand years
To mourn him lying there.

“ O mother, o'er the slain I've bent
Until the dark came creeping;
But found no trace of him I loved,
Where they lay calmly sleeping.
No longer will I live and dwell
Beneath earth's treach'rous sky,
He was not found among the dead, . . .
And therefore will I die.”

THE SKIES

THE skies are there! E'en through the slumbrous night,
The ancient joyous stars are scintillating;
And when at dawn the jocund day stands waiting
On misty hills; and when the sun is bright

At zenith day, the skies are there! Their light
But softens when at eventide the prating,
Unresting babes would dream; but not abating
One jot or tittle of their wondrous might.

The skies are there! Ye weary eyes, look out;
Ye hard-drawn brows, unbend; grow calm again.
E'en though the skies be dull, they once were fair,
And shall be so anon. So, with a shout
Or sigh or psalm of gladness, careworn men,
Look out and up, and know: the skies are there!

THE TELESCOPE

(TO HAHNEMANN)

PATER SCHEINER in his cell
Labored patiently and well,
Fashioning another eye
That therewith he might espy
Nearer, clearer all the stars,
And the gleamy Northern bars
Which in winter season shone
From the far-off polar zone;
That, though sternly cloister-bound,
He might bid his glance rove round
Hill and dale and mead and stream;
Catch the sun's first rosy beam;
Watch the eagles in their flight
To the mountain's sombre height;
Or the peasant from the wold
Hie his swine unto the fold.

Fashioned patiently the glass
And the tube through which might pass
All the unseen rays of light
That should dawn upon his sight,
And henceforth most docile be
To the magic sesame.

The Prior of Sonnenflecken
Full five miles far did ride,
Most worshipful magister,
Most well-paunched prior he.
A flagon's depth, a capon brown
Had lodgment safe beneath his gown,
And hence he somewhat drowsed.
And had his palfrey not before
Full many times the way gone o'er,
We fear the prior had been late
In coming to the cloister gate.
So drowsy he, at last his book
With splashing loud fell in a stream
O'er which he passed,
And waked the prior,
And also much aroused his ire.
The book had known a donor fair,—
The prior really had a care,
To see a lazy, lousy chub
His moss-grown snout against it rub.
He fished it out, and went his way,
Nor drowsed again that summer's day.

Pater Scheiner at the door
Met the prior as of yore.

“ Salve, Pater, let me see
If the book much injured be?
For I saw you had mishap
Where the golden willows lap
Grünthal brook, where winds the road
Past Hans Sonnenschein’s abode.”
Then the prior darkly frowned:
“ Hast thou left the cloister ground?
Else how knowest thou my book
Fell into the Grünthal brook?”
“ Prior, from my cell I went
Never forth; this instrument,
Placed before mine eye, hath spied
All that happed when thou didst ride.
With this tube and glass I saw
(Guided by some wondrous law
Of the light and tube and glass)
All that yonder came to pass.”
Then the prior frowned indeed:
“ I in Aristotle read
Naught of such a law or tool.
Thou art both a knave and fool.
Get thee to thy cell, and do
Penance long, and let thy rue
Wear the knotted rope in twain,
That thou come to wit again.”

Then the Prior turned and prayed,
And these holy words he sayed:
Heal his mind, O Domine,
Of this rankest heresy.

Amen!

SANS AMOUR

THE ghastly moon upon the Dead Sea shines,
And with a sullen silver tips the lines
Of moody surges, ponderous and slow,
Whipped by the urgent winds to writhe and flow,
Seeking escape from self-wrought bitterness.
The heart that loveth not, shall know
How lack o' love engend'reth bitter woe.

THE PSALMIST

FROM the past, which is dead, the future is bred ;
And the oak that for centuries stood,
When it crashes to earth
Gives a thousand forms birth,
As the elements leap to their food.

From the past, which is dead, the future is bred ;
And the light that is flung from the sun,
In its marvellous flight
To the regions of night,
Is reborn ere its race is outrun.

From the past, which is dead, the future is bred ;
And the planet whose fires long were cold,
Hath its place in a plan
Past the concept of man,
To the angels of God known of old.

From the past, which is dead, the future is bred ;
And the soul with its flickering breath,
Hath no fear or despair,—
I, Jehovah, am there,
And life shall be nurtured in death.

THE SCHOOL-HOUSE

IBSEN

WHILE sheaves of gold and the wood's green
glooms

Must yield to the sere leaf flying,
We hallow here a garden whose blooms
Shall blow in a realm undying.
It lies aloft where the great cliffs start,
Its walls stand firmly and steadfast;
God bless the labor of hand and heart,
The work we have here encompassed.

We mountain dwellers, we know full well
That heather blooms near to heaven;
We know that the pine on the mountain fell,
Strikes for the Pleiades seven;
We know the grain of the upland fields
Gives harvest the richest, the rarest;
The school-house also its harvest yields
Of fruitage the best and the fairest.

Jehovah will give of His weather fair
To the garden of souls below;
That the jetting leaf and the seedlet rare
Of the mind and the soul may grow.
He will send His freedom's zephyr bland,
And light from His radiant sun;
For thought and freedom go hand in hand,
As spring-time and bird-song are one.

Hence, hallowed be to the care of souls,
Thou garden of thought, troubled never;

The seed here sown, while Time's cycle rolls,
Shall vanquish Death's woe forever.
Yet banish not spring-time's joyous glow
From learning's abode and spirit;
But beneath the roof, thy walls raise so
That they shall protect, not limit.

EHEU!

WHAT'S the use o' being poet?
All's been said, and we all know it.
When the same old string is there
Who shall play another air?
Something wildly sweet and strange,
With a broader, deeper range;
Stars and sun all left behind,
Moon and sea and sighing wind,
Fading into nothingness
With the new strange song's caress.
All forgot; love, life and death,
As by all who've lost their breath
And gone hence, or hither, thither,
As when flower-petals wither
And the cold winds of the north
From the gardens cast them forth.
Ah! 'twas something, poem-making,
With the ancient first dawn breaking.
Who the primal ocean saw,
Who beheld the great god draw
In one mighty whelming arc,
After wind and storm and dark,
Pulsing colors 'thwart the sky,—
Was a lucky dog, say I.

And the poet who first dreamed
Of the subtlety of glance
That forerunneth love's advance,
Sure he must have woven rimes
In those fair primeval times,
Without feeling quite passé
In a world un peu blasé.
Oh! to have an unwrought theme,
Deep to delve in mines that gleam
With a pristine, perfect gold!
Not to think of time or tide
Or the fact that all have died,
Or must die, and go to—
Or to heaven, few can tell.
Ugh, these weather-beaten lays
And their rimy, rummy maze!
What's the use o' being poet?
All's been said, and we all know it.

TO MY SON

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE

GO! but heed thou my monitions;
Use thy youth, its winged moments,
Let each day thy progress see.
On Fortuna's scale the potence
Of the tongue most small doth be;
Thou must wax or wane by choosing;
Thou must rule and grasp the kingship,
Or in serfdom bear the losing;
Vict'ry boast or woes confusing;
Sledge or anvil thou must be.

THE GARDENS OF ROSES
FROM THE GERMAN OF TROJAN

IN vales low-lying, the roses
 Bloom wondrously and fair;
And to them the sun discloses
 All that it hath most rare.

Far off on the mountain's watch-tower,
 Where eagles soar alone,
Snow-roses bloom in a bower
 Beneath the sun-king's throne.

High over hills impending,
 In purest air there blooms
A garden of roses, blending
 The dawn-light with perfumes.

Thrice, and each time the rarer,
 Have rose-filled gardens shined;
Above them I think a fairer
 Than all I yet shall find.

THE POET
FROM THE FRENCH OF REGNIER, 1593

THUS, whene'er one shall see on the highway a
 wight
With his stockings impaired, and his neckcloth a
 sight,
With his elbows in rags, breeches out at the knees,
With a thin pauper face and an air ill at ease,—
Without asking his name, one may know the poor
 ass,
He's a poet, or else for a poet would pass.

WANNEMUNNE

FROM THE FINNISH EPIC, KALEVALA

IN days primeval when the earth was young and still;

When Nature breathed, but gave no sound;
When Thought, scarce moving yet its infant limbs
Fast-held in swaddling bands of silence, lay
On the swelling breast of Time; hither came,
So runs the ancient story, to the earth
The song-god Wannemunne, heaven born,
At eventide while still the fulgent sun
Lingered majestic on the purple hills,
Ere yet the image of the aural clouds
Had vanished from the mirror of the pool.

Downward he swept from his far skyey home
On glancing pinions whose vibrations brought
First earth-awakening echoing melodies,
And winged his way through the close amb'ent air
Terrestrial, until he came
Where rounds above the plain a vast cathedral hill;
Upon whose summit spires up to the sky
A sacred wood, where dwelt the elder gods,
The heavenly artisans, that shaped the earth from
chaos,
Yet to whom had not been given
To lend a voice to all that they had wrought
With cunning hand, nor breathe a thought
Into the dormant brain of man, whom they
Held the great masterpiece, their labor's crown.

Thither he went:
The hoary trees, the herbs,

The grass, the flow'rs, bent mutely worshipping;
The wingèd creatures stopped in silent flight;
And they that tread the earth,
With raisèd paw held short their course;
The stream lay channel-bound,
As gelid with the winter's frosty blast.—
And Wannemunne smiled, and took his way
To where the mount did almost touch the sky.

There rose a golden altar, dight with gems,
Which burned with living fire as the last rays
Of western sun shot level through the wood.
And there he stood and spake.

Creation heard,

And movèd not. He spake again and said:
Awake, arise, and hither come to me!
And ev'ry create thing moved at his word.

And Wannemunne sate down on the steps
Of the great altar in the ancient wood,
And swept his hand across the sounding harp,
And sang!

And first the leaves caught the soft murmuring,
The summer winds began to sign and moan;
The streamlet's wave moved in a rhythmic dance,
And from the surface peeped the round-eyed fish,
And gasped; the sev'ral beasts each caught his note,
As forth it came from out the wondrous harp,
Or echoed on the conscious air in song.

Then first was heard the thunder of the sea,
Whose beryl surges rolled far up the strand
To list to Wannemunne.

Last of all came Man,
And last he sang.

The chords of life began to sway,
As when a lute
Echoes another's harmonies. So he gave back
An answer to the music of the god.

And Wannemunne, when he heard the sound
Of human voice, did smile and cease his song,
And spread his shining wings, and rose afar
Out of the forest eld, nor came again.

THE POET'S DEATH

MY chariot waits, the poet cried,
My sable car awaits, and I must go.
The hour of parting ever comes, O friends,
Though sad, farewell!
But ere I go,
I'll drink your health,—
Your health, good friends, and long fair days,
And ev'ry joy,
And sweet remembrance.
And from his bosom drew he forth a cup,
A gently fashioned cup, red-hued,
Enchased, and set with many jewels.
Oho, my friends, he cried,
My heart to you!
He touched the rim,
And out there rang a song,—
'Tis echoing still.
My heart, my choicest treasure!
And I'll fill't with wine,
A purple wine of many years,
The best and all I have.
See! In its glow

Ye have my life.
My heart, my wine o' blood, heart's-blood,
O friends,
To you!
And maiden, gentle maid,
Cast thou therein a pearl, . . . a tear!
Behold! It mingles, seethes, rolls!
Ah, not the gold of all the world,
Nor of ten thousand worlds,
Shall buy this draught!
. . . And all your healths!
Drink deep;—when done,
The chalice breaks forevermore.
Whither?—Oh, what a sudden mist!
Why scintillate the lights?
Ah, yes! The mist of parting.
Whither?—To Yesterday, nor ever shall return.
Fare ye . . . The chalice crashed upon the floor!
And there was moaning and the sound of tears.

AMORIS ANIMA

THY ways, O Love, are as the sea
Whose deeps are searchless and whose waves
Through hidden paths glide ceaselessly.

Thy growth, O Love, is like the morn,
That stealeth o'er the moon-strown hills;
And while we dream, its light is born.

Thy face, O Love, no eye hath known,
Save in the image of a heart
That loveth well, . . . with laugh and moan.

Thy times, O Love, are days long by . . .
And now . . . and æons yet to come;
Thy death, O Love?—when souls shall die.

THE VOYAGE OF SINGERS

IPSEN

THROUGH the long lines of the islands
On the sun-lit Sabbath day,
Bedight with a hundred gay ribands,
Our boat proudly wends its way.

On board, the song of young voices,
Jubilant leapeth the bound;
Loud through the fjord rejoices,
Filling the narrow sound.

Horn and tuba are flinging
Blasts from the high-stemmed boat;
Chimes of church bells are ringing;—
Strilen to-day takes no note.*

He hears not the chime's high music,
The psalm-book forgotten lies;
Heeds not the mass and the rubric;
Intent on the joyous cries.

Yet surely, as there he traces
These wonders, and turns to see
Over the tone-filled spaces,
Not far from his God is he.

* Strilen, the fisherman of Bergen ; type in a noted painting by Gude.

The thoughts of the song-train sweeping,
He knows not, nor cares to know;
But the tide of his deep heart, leaping,
Now cold and now warm doth flow.

From his seat on the knoll, upstarting,
He stands on the cliff's high brow;
The singers wave caps in parting,
He answers with stately bow.

Through gorges naked, forbidding,
We speed o'er the billows blue;
He watches the smoke-wreaths thridding,
Till they fade in the distant view.

With dancing pennons we wander,
We sing as the birds that play;
He sits there again, and doth ponder,—
Something wondrous went by this way!

We hasten to revel resplendent
With blooms and a suffused light;
His guests are the spirits transcendent
Of earnestness, grave as night.

And yet, grieve thou not nor repent thee
He stayed from the service long;
With him the encounter surely
Left reflect of light and song.

See, thus shall young hearts aspiring,
Richly joyous go life's young way;
The sound of a song untiring
Far-rolling o'er sea and bay.

No cavern so wild and so dreary
But echo it hath, though with flaw;
And we are the singing-birds cheery,
Bearing seed-corn in beak and claw;

Wheresoever the busy wings flutter,
O'er the hill-top or fjord below;
A seed-grain falls to the utter-
Most corner, and there doth grow.

OLE UNCLE PETE

O LE Uncle Pete wuz er white-wooled dark,
An' er poor, ole dark wuz he.

He wore a coat wot by courtesy
Wuz dubbed er coat, but Ole Peter he
Tottered erlong, mumblin' merrily,—
Half er mouthful for a shark.

His fav'rite hants wuz the deep ash-cans,
Wot stood outside the door;
His clutch on er coal made the angels weep;
At a crust his joy put all 'ell to sleep,
An' cold az it wuz, Ole Peter 'd keep
A-singin', "Pull fer the shore."

One day Ole Peter came by no more;—
The ash-cans got er rest.
The streets wuz cold, not a soul wuz nigh,
When by chanst I lookt at the snow-filled sky,
An' I saw Ole Peter a-scootin' by,
Asleep on an angel's breast.

Ole Pete wuz a preacher I'll not fergit;
May I go where Ole Pete haz gone.
His meals wuz scant an' his coat wuz thin,
But his soul wuz brave, an' they called him in
To a feast where the angels are next of kin,—
An' he sings with the stars at dawn.

CONCENTRATION

FROM THE SWEDISH OF SNOILSKY

THY purpose must be single; only one,
 But that one, all;
With giant's strength but pigmy deeds are done,
 When portioned small.

Thou must be quickly settled in thy choice;
 Warfare or peace;
For shell or kernel thou must give thy voice,—
 Then, no release.

One sought for pearls,—another chased the foam
 Where life's waves shine;
Moan not if bubbles vanish as they roam,—
 The choice was thine.

THE VIOLINIST

IBSEN

MY thought was ever upon her
 All the star-strown summer night;
But my way ran down to the river,
 To the sedge with its dew-pearls bright.

Ha! knowest thou sorrow and song-burst,
Canst thou witch-wind the beautiful's heart,
That through temple and hall in meekness
She'll follow adream thy art?

I conjured the sea-hidden evil,
And God I forgot by his side;
When he was the slave, I the master,
She was my brother's bride.

Through temple and hall high-columned,
My art gives me leave to go;—
From the waterfall's sorrow and song-burst
Never surcease my heart may know.

A SUMMER TRAGEDY

UPON the sward close by his earthy home,
The dying woodchuck lies, and through the
film
Of dissolution coming fast, doth mark
The scene, which e'er from morn till dewy eve,
Had been a sweet rejoicement to his eye;
His modest house with brier-covered door;
The little brook that rippled through the vale,
Whereto led well-worn paths through which each
day,
At dawn and in the twilight hour he went
To slake his thirst; and yonder on the hill,
The clover-bed whose luscious leaves and stalks
Made feasting for an epicure. Above,
His dimming glance dwells on the azure sky,
That never frowned for him, nor showered down

Great icy flakes to chill his marrow-bones;
For he doth sleep the winter through, secure
Within his low-roofed house, nor ever fears
Hibernal storm.

Alas, the end hath come
To these enjoyments! He the rigor feels
Of fast-approaching death thrill through his limbs;
His nervous little paws which built with skill
His humble home, the scene of all his joys,
Grip in the earth and tear the grass-roots out;
A pulsing crimson stream flows slowly from
The cruel wound that rifle-ball hath made,—
He raises up his head;—a final glance,
A last, a fond farewell he bids to life;
And sinketh down and stretcheth forth his limbs.
A tremor shakes his frame, . . . then all is still.
Poor beastie! With intent hast injured none;
In all thy ways thou didst but follow out
The simple law of nature, planted deep
At birth within thy breast. But man demurs,
Accuses thee of wrong, and direly armed
With savage weapon of destructive force,
Pursueth thee, and crying, Retribution!
Shoots thee down!

Yet mine eye is some suffused,
To see thee lying there, unfearing, still.

STERNFALL

IN des Wassers klarem Spiegel,
 In der sommernächtlich' Stille,
Hab' ich Sterne fallen sehen,
 Fallen aus dem hohen Himmel.

Aus der Tiefe klaren Wassers
Augenblicklich sah ich steigen,
In die Höhe sich erheben,
Andre Sterne, jenen ähnlich.

Bleibt das Wasser trüb', unruhig,
Aus der Tiefe keine Sterne
In die Höhe sich erheben,
Und das Wundersternlein schwindet.

In der Seele klarem Spiegel,
Aus der Tiefe ihrer Reinheit,
Hoch empor zu Gott ersteigen
Bilder, Seinem Sternfall ähnlich.

Bleibt die Seele trüb', unruhig,
Geht der Wunderstern verloren;
All ist dunkel, und die Wunder
Seiner Gnade bald verschwinden.

GLORIA MUNDI

TO live: ay, live, not just exist, eat, sleep;
To live, and say:
Thou brave fair world;
Thou sun, thou sea, moon, star and drifting cloud,
Grave mountain summit, dainty dew-sopped vale,
All hail!
Ye too, frank hearts, fair souls, lithe bodies;
Sweet dames, bold cavaliers, and all douce courtesies
And loves and deeds, all hail!
To glance the world with pleasure; ay, to have
And hold therein most pertinent ambition

And gen'rous hopes;
To plan the useful years,
To joy in their fulfilment, and . . .
To turn the eye, and without moan or sigh
Envisage Death and smile.
And vested with the clinging shadow-robcs,
To murmur softly, Vale, Vanitas!
A year . . . a day . . . all flesh is as the grass
And flow'r of harvest.—
Is the twilight come?—
Fair dreams, ye living, and for me,—fair dreams.
This, child, is buoyant wisdom, so meseems.

YOUTH

THE lute hath silver strings and sound
When life is young;
The rose hath honey for the bee
When life is young;
Oh, life trips free and love laughs joyously,
And moonbeams light the pearls beneath the sea,
When life is young.
Oh, wanton is the eye, and wanton heart,
When life is young;
And troubled is the eye, and troubled heart,
When life is young.—
Oh, wanton trouble, haste not to depart,—
For life is young!

ON THE MOUNTAINS

IBSEN

THE shadows of the summer night
Fall veil-like o'er the dales;
Against the mountain's toppling height
A sea, swept by the gales
Of twilight, rolls; the gray waves hide
In cloud-swirls all from sight;
The sun-lit glacier, that in pride
Looked o'er the lands on ev'ry side,
Crowned with a golden light.

But o'er the sweep of misty surge
Where gold and amber gleam,
Fair pleasant lands of peace emerge,
Like sea-strown isles they seem.
The great rock eagle soars away,
As ships seek other clime;
While like a wizard army gray,
'Gainst God the giant hills array
Their westward front sublime.

But see, there yonder half-hid lies
A cottage in the snow;
The purple hills, the glaciers rise
Above its roof-tree low.
There bides a world secluded, still;
A people calm of heart;
From cities hid by rock and rill
Their vision loftier heavens fill,
Where fairer sunbeams dart.

Behold ! the herd-girl silent stands,
In light and shadow clad ;
The mountain faun her gaze commands,
No christ'ning drop hath had ;
She knows not what the lad would tell,
Perchance knows not his name ;
But to the sound of horn and bell,
Athwart the sunbeam, glances fell ;—
Love plays his ancient game.

So soon, alas, the moments go,
Where shepherds watch their flocks ;
Soon falls the mantle of the snow
Where twire the beetling rocks ;
Then shalt thou by the oven warm,
The winter's task engage,
Wool, hemp thou weavest, safe from harm,—
The mountain twilight hath its charm,
Though wintry tempests rage.

COTOPAXI

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

THEY say that Cotopaxi
Doth melt in one swift night,
The snows that lay for ages
Upon its sullen height.

One oft hath deemed a spirit
Of glacial ice and snow,
Until it melts the masking,
In seething overflow.

The fierce, volcanic outburst
Hath issue as before;
A lyric deluge rolleth
The whole wide country o'er.

THE LAND OF PROMISE

THREE is a land of wonderment, a land
Whereon the sun doth rise at morn a god,
Vestured in promise, in whose mighty hand
A sceptre, burgeoned full like Aaron's rod
With swelling buds of what shall be, doth rest.

And when the night doth slowly rise, and mount
Her ebon car,—he lingers on the hills,
Yet radiant, yet hopeful, nor doth count
The day misspent. Then she, the dark queen
fills
All heaven with starry jewels glowing bright.

She breathes upon the slumbrous land, and sends
A winged dream that wanders through the brain,
Laden with future thoughts and deeds; she lends
The music of the vernal winds, to pain
With bitter-sweet the soul of him that sleeps.

Ah, 'tis a magic lovely land! The flow'rs
Hang low with fragrance; there the waters flow
With tinkling elfin ripplings through the hours
Of blithesome summer days,—nor ever know
The dwellers in that land what woe may be.

Sometimes they weep,—ah, yes! but those soft
tears

Soon vanish, and a smile lights up the eye
Of innocence, for cank'rous brooding fears
Are strangers to the ever azure sky,
And to the hearts that have their sojourn there.

Where doth it lie, this Land of Great Delight?
And wast thou e'er therein? Oh, tell us, pray.
O soul, thou knowest the land, its borders bright,
Its glowing, joy-filled, sighing summer day;
Once thou didst roam the fair far land of youth.

NIGHT ON THE OCEAN

FROM THE FRENCH OF DELONCLE

A SOMBRE cloud arched o'er sad western skies,
Beneath whose low'ring brow the bloodshot
sun

Darts flame; mute, awed, we watch till day is done,
Till purple night upon the long surge lies.
A burst of sunbeams! 'Tis the end! Day dies.
All forms and colors fade,—and like a nun
Forth-pacing in the gloom, a sea-gull lone
Murmurs farewell, and into shadow flies.

And night, night awless reigns. And we are lost,
Upon a heaving unknown ocean tost;
Athwart our souls its heavy shadows fall.
The countless stars burn deep in skies profound,
Like tears of mourners, caught in cere-cloth's bound,
Which gleam like silver stars on velvet pall.

THE POET'S SONG

IBSEN

SUN-BRIGHT days in gardens flow'r-drest,
Vouchsafed were for joy and play;
Ponder not, that autumn's harvest
Oft belies what spring may say.
Apple-blossoms wanton, cheery,
O'er thee raise a fairy tent;
Let them fall all withered, dreary,
On the hills when day is spent.

Why the fruit in unrest seeking,
When the flow'r is on the tree?
Wherefore sorrow, wherefore weeping?
Masked the chrysalis must be.
Wherefore heed the scarecrow shaking
Day and night upon its pole?
Brothers, birds in song outbreaking,
Play a gladder, better role.

Wherefore fright the birds that frolic
On the spray of blossoms rare?
Barter hopes for their sweet music,
Hopes for songs; th' exchange is fair.
Trust me, gainful is the buying;
Bartering fruits not ripe, for song;
List the saying, Time is flying;
Spring-time flowers last not long.

Life, be thou my portion, singing
Till the last dull leaf floats down;
Buoyantly in heaps upflinging,
Forth I'll cast the leaves so brown.

Ope the door, and let the cynic
Growl and grumble as he please;
Mine the flow'rs! the worth intrinsic,
Let him seek it at his ease!

THE SEA

CONVOLUTIONOUS billows drone a sea-song, and the monotone
Lulls to sleep the summer breeze,
Brings in repose the aspen leaves.
In the sun-glow
Of mid-day ever cadent flow
Beryl surges wreathed in foam across the golden
sands
And roam thither where the rippled strand
Borders on the firm dry land,—
Turn and swiftly find a path
To old ocean,
Lest the wrath
Of some choleric forest sprite,
Some dryad, moss-grown, lay a blight upon them;
But when back to sea,
August they rise in majesty, and stretch their lines
And grandly sweep back to the shore, and fiercely
leap
Upon the land. . . .
And all day long and through the night they sing a
song,
A murmur'ring monotonous song,
A dreamful slumber-laden song.

REFORM

THE “idols of the den,” Greed, Lust, Hypocrisy,
Must be thrown down,
Consumed upon the altar,
Before the “idols of the market-place” are burned.
Which not done,
These rise immortal, phoenix-like,
From every holocaust.

HOLY DAYS

TO rest; to be at peace.
To feel the heart beat gently.
To watch a far-thrown storm-cloud
Writhe, and hurl forth flame,—
And lie bathed in warm sunshine,
And inhale half-somnolent,
Wrought to a Brahmic ecstasy,
The breath of zephyrs
Blown across a river-bank of lotus-bloom,
Of violets and wild-rose
Blending with the lethal scent
Of opiate poppies.
To rest.
To be at peace.
The soul hath holy days.

To think,—effortless.
To dream fair dreams;
To feel the shadow of good thoughts,
Ay, noble thoughts,

Come sweeping o'er the passive mind,
As cloudy shadows blown by summer wind,
Come gliding o'er a mead
Of nodding flowers.
To look down on the old, old earth,
As hov'ring o'er its green-topped hills and verdant
dales
On angel's wing,—
Half-pitying, half-amused.
To rest,
With gently-beating heart.
These are the spirit's holy days.

To rest.
To fade away
Into a half-oblivion.
To look up to the firmament
And see the lamps of God lit by the Night;
To listen to antiphonal choirs of spheres
Answering Hallelujah with Amen.
To watch a falling star
Sign unto Earth a brave great sacrificial soul
Hath entered Heaven;
To know that many stars are falling. . . .
But we do not see!
To look upon the twilight-vestured world,
And know God in the darkness,—
And to trust! These are holy days.

To cry;
To feel the agony
Of life and living.

To do battle
Bravely
With one's soul.
To groan beneath the burden of a sin;
To moan when Death hath entered in
And plucked the fairest flow'r
That blossomed in the garden of our heart.
To die and yet to live.
To weep and through the tears
Behold the bow of promise.
To live; to be at peace.
These all are sabbaths of the soul.

THE DEMON DAY

IBSEN

WHEN young I wended schoolward,
 Of courage I'd enough;
That is,—till slowly downward,
 The sun sank to the bluff.

Then when the night's dim shadow
 O'er mount and hillock fell,
The kobolds chilled my marrow,—
 Their tricks old legends tell.

And when my eyelids slowly
 Drew shut, strange dreams I dreamed;
My courage vanished wholly,
 An age the night-time seemed.

Now, now a change is on me;
All's altered in my mind;
When sunbeams glitter brightly,
No hardihood I find.

Now 'tis the troll of daytime;
'Tis life's loud rough unrest,
That shakes the hoary frost-rime
Of terror in my breast.

I hide me, shadow-awless,
In twilight's fearsome veil;
My passions burst forth lawless,
On eagle pinions sail.

I dare the flames, the ocean;
Like hawk I soar on high;
Forgetting grief's emotion,—
Till dawn gleams in the sky!

Then, when the sunbeams trespass,
My thoughts affrighted run;
If e'er great deed I compass,
'Twill be in darkness done.

AT EVENTIDE

AT eventide, just in a yonder room,
When lamps are lit, and all the twilight gloom
Is banished into corners or outdoors;
A little group of gentle home-bound sprites
Do gather to enjoy the rare delights

Of journeying to far-off, vasty worlds;
To islands in a spumy, surging sea;
To caves where kobolds dwell in mystery;
To lands and times and folk of strangest ways.

I hear a gentle voice that telleth tales
Of wonder, yet not new;
As o'er the vales of spring-time, southern gales
Come whisp'ring of a by-gone, vanished year,
So fall the words with comfort on mine ear,—

“Once lived . . . Aladdin . . . Crusoe,—
murm'ring soft;

And Alice, and the Soldier made of Tin;
And Rabbits White, and Sailor Lads aloft;
Olympian gods of old, heroic days;
And Nymphs and Nixies with their tricky ways; . . .

I often listen; sometimes peer around
A friendly door to watch the eager eyes
Of lad and lass, their hearts so firmly bound
And meshed within the wondrous artful net
Of valiant days and folk, and worlds that never
were.

And then I turn . . . back to the old arm-chair;
And sit me down, and utter prayer of thanks;
That, in the lonely wand'ring of a soul
Forthgoing from the day of carnal birth
Unto a night that prologues other days,
Passing this way, but turning not again,
I thus have seen at eventide, a band
Of gentle, gracious spirits, who, entranced,
Strayed through the blissful realms of phantasie.

THERE RUNS A RUNE

FROM THE DANISH OF V. D. RECKE

THREE runs a rune of maiden bound
In a castle none knows where;
A dragon coils his length around
The demesne where sleeps the fair.

She slumbers in a hidden room,
Forever young and fair;
No storm comes thither with its gloom,
Nor softly suppliant prayer.

Ah, well I know the maiden's bower;
I know where the lily sleeps;
The dragon, too, that round the tower
His grim watch stilly keeps.

Ah, wert thou miles and miles away,
And betwixt lay sea, hill, stream;
As arrow loosed, I would not stay
To wake thee from thy dream.

Ah, were there leagues and leagues between,
Still had I strength to dart
A well-tried lance, with edges keen,
Straight to the dragon's heart!

But, hopeless ev'ry strife and quest,
And all too weak my force;—
The castle's deep within my breast,
The dragon is Remorse.

THE ASRA

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

DAILY went the sultan's daughter
To and fro in all her beauty;
When the shades of night descended,
Where the spring's white waters rippled.

Daily stood the slave so youthful
By the spring where night descended;
By the spring's white rippling waters;
Stood, and paler grew and paler.

On an ev'ning came the sultan's
Daughter to him, and spake quickly,
"I would know thy name and country,
I would know thy home and people."

And the slave said, "Men do call me
Slave Mohamed, born in Yemen;
And my people are the Asra,
And they die, when love is on them."

THE RAVINE

IBSEN

DKARK grew the sky, the thunders crashed;
Through deep ravine a wild flood dashed.

And, as the stream's fierce waters rolled,
They foamed, seethed, sang, all uncontrolled.

The storm swept by, the air grew clear;
Shrunk to a rill the flood ran near.

A dust of rainbow drops one sees;
And lucent pearls slip from the trees.

The star of Sirius reigns supreme;
In deep ravines no waters gleam.

But sounds remained; the raindrops plashed;
Boughs creaked, and leaves a-rustling flashed.

I thought of fountains in a wood
Where long ago I dreaming stood.

MY WINE O' YOUTH

IBSEN

MY wine o' youth thou call'dst thee, wine;
I, wine-cask, bay-wreathed lover.
With fragrant breath, thou gleamedst fine,
Fermenting swift; and thou wast mine;—
The process then was over.

My wine was stolen by a knave;
Yet still the lees lie under.
I shall not wake thee, shall not rave;
Thee from explosion I will save,—
The staves shall fall asunder.

COUNSEL

My Son:

Have wholesome contempt for riches,
But despise not the deserving rich;
Yet love better the meritorious poor.
Turn thine heel on the man of knowledge,

But search wisdom and wise men.
Wisdom shall greet thee on the highway,
And twitch thine arm;
The wise man thou shalt find
When thou art wise.
Bend the knee to none,
But stand!
The tree that makes obeisance
Is weak;
Better to fall as the oak
Before angry winds,
Than bend as the reed,
And wither with the southward turning of the
sun.

Flee ease, but seek repose.
The dawn comes slowly but irresistibly.
Ask not thy friend:
Hast thou wealth or knowledge or an ancestor?
But, What art thou?
An thou be wise,
Thou'l have a wise friend.
Eat of his salt,
But neither give nor ask surety,—
'Tis the office of an acquaintance.
Add not to the income of lawyers;
Their profit is of fools.
Let books grow old ere thou turnest a page.
Flee flattery. A flatterer
Is a worm with a sting.
Let thy tongue cleave to thy palate,
And none shall whisper thy business;
Nor listen much to common voices,

That thy soul's peace be not disturbed.
Gain a trade; the mouth cries for food.
Suit thy business to this counsel,
Or this counsel to thy business,
As thou shalt will.
Few reach the mountain peak
And stand alone;
Stand thou alone!

To My Daughter:
Sex is nature's provision
For propagating descendants;
Wisdom is not busied therewith.

THE MINER

IBSEN

O RE-VEIN, yield with crashing din,
As my heavy sledge breaks in.
I must find my way unbidden,
Where the sounding ore lies hidden.

Deep within the mountain's night
Lies a priceless treasure bright,
Crystal fire and rare gems shimmer
Where the branching gold-veins glimmer.

In the depths bides peace so still;
Peace the wilderness doth fill;
Fall, O sledge, in heavy measure,
Rend me way unto heart's-treasure.

Once, a lad, I sat at night
Joy-witched 'neath the heavens bright;
Sought the spring-time in the wildwood,
Eyes aglow with peace of childhood.

But I lost the light of day
In the deep mine's darkened way;
Through the mid-earth passage creeping,
Lost the song, the scythe's swift sweeping.

With my first descent I thought,—
Mind all guileless, heart unbought,—
Earth-sprites shall the riddle solve me;
Life's enigma they shall solve me.

But, no sprite thereof hath taught
What meseems so wonder-fraught;
And the earth, asunder riven,
No refulgent ray hath given.

Have I erred? And is the way
Barred unto the clear calm day?
When I rise to sunlit vision,
Blindness strikes me with derision.

Nay, my path is underground;
There eternal peace is found;
Fall, O sledge, in heavy measure,
Rend me way unto heart's-treasure.

Stroke repeating, blow on blow,
Till life's tide no more shall flow;
Till the dawn-star's light is o'er,
Hope's bright sun shines nevermore.

A LEGEND

FROM THE SWEDISH OF FRANZEN

EPIPHANIUS gentle was, and mild;
Free from pride or avarice as a child.
And once a woman came unto his door,
Weeping, and cried: My husband's dead;
And in the house there's not a crumb of bread.
How shall I in this destitution sore
Find means to bury him, and even more
Buy for my babes of food a scanty store?
To her the bishop gave all in his purse,
And thereto added many a hope-filled verse
Of Scripture, and among them,—Who fulfils
The will of God shall live although he die.
But, of many a one 'tis often said,
He lives, though cold in Death's embrace he lie.
She, with the money well within her clutch,
Rose up, and laughed: Of need there's not so much!
And calling to her mate, who lay as dead
Upon the board, Get up, get up! she said,
And come away! Life waits us; life, wine, bread!
He answered not.

She bent to help him then.
But he was cold, and never rose again.

WINTER

THE dying embers of a winter day
Lay smouldering in the west;
Darting a sudden red flame to a star,
And then, opprest with cold,
Shiv'ring away.

The wind-sprites ceased their merry morrice dance,
And perched,
A thousand little icy ghosts,
Upon the branch
Of still-tranced maple.
And the frost-elf came
And traced a silver lace-work on the pane,
And wrought long candy ice-canæs of the rain
That dripped adown the eaves;
Some brown-clad leaves
Crisped tighter their thin bodies as he passed;
Then all grew still.
And all the stars flashed out,
And swung great trembling lanterns all about,
Heralding the royal regent moon,
Who to her cloudy car
Stepped from the eastern hill,
And rolled afar
Through realms of lazuli,
Past beryl seas.
The mountains towered great darkling fortresses of
cold,
With sentinel pines on guard along their walls.
The fields lay purified;
And from the brush
Some wise-eared rabbits skurried
With a rush of dainty feet,
And on the tufted green, all swept and clean,
And garnished with the snow-flakes' crystal sheen,
Danced the long winter night away.

LEBEWOHL

DAS Spiel ist aus,—
Tiefsinnig Leut';
Die Sonn' ist warm,—
Genug für heut'.

UNIV. OF MICHIGAN,

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